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AUCTOR PRETIOSA FACIT
James Lenox.

THE

WORKS

OF

ALEXANDER POPE, ESQ.

WITH NOTES AND ILLUSTRATIONS

BY

HIMSELF AND OTHERS.

TO WHICH ARE ADDED,

A NEW LIFE OF THE AUTHOR,

AN ESTIMATE OF HIS

POETICAL CHARACTER AND WRITINGS,

AND OCCASIONAL REMARKS,

BY

WILLIAM ROSCOE, ESQ.

IN TEN VOLUMES.

VOL. V.

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AN

ESSAY ON MAN,

IN FOUR EPISTLES.

TO

HENRY ST. JOHN,

LORD VISCOUNT BOLINGBROKE.

If it be a true observation, that for a poet to write happily and well, he must have seen and felt what he describes, and must draw from living models alone; and if modern times, from their luxury and refinement, afford not manners that will bear to be described; it will then follow, that those species of poetry bid fairest to succeed at present, which deliver doctrines, not display events. Of this sort is didactic and descriptive poetry. Accordingly the moderns have produced many excellent pieces of this kind. We may mention the Syphilis of Fracastorius, the Silkworms and Chess of Vida, the Ambra of Politian, the Agriculture of Alamanni, the Art of Poetry of Boileau, the Gardens of Rapin, the Cyder of Philips, the Chase of Somerville, the Pleasures of Imagination, the Art of preserving Health, the Fleece, the Religion of Racine the younger, the elegant Latin poem of Brown on the Immortality of the Soul, the Latin poems of Stay and Boscovick, and the philosophical poem before us; to which, if we may judge from some beautiful fragments, we might have added Gray's didactic poem on Education and Government, had he lived to finish it; and the English Garden of Mr. Mason must not be omitted.

Pope informs us, in his first preface to this Essay, "that he chose this epistolary way of writing, notwithstanding his subject was high, and of dignity, because of its being mixed with argument, which of its nature approacheth to prose." He has not wandered into any useless digressions; has employed no fictions, no tale or story; and has relied chiefly on the poetry of his style for the purpose of interesting his readers. His style is concise and figurative, forcible and elegant. He has many metaphors and images, artfully interspersed in the driest passages, which stood most in need of such ornaments. Nevertheless there are too many lines, in this performance, plain and prosaic. The meaner the subject is of a preceptive poem, the more striking appears the art of the poet. It is even of use, perhaps, to choose a low subject. In this respect Virgil has the advantage over Lucretius; the latter, with all his vigour and sublimity of genius, could hardly satisfy and come up to the grandeur of his theme. Pope labours under the same difficulty. If any beauty in this Essay be uncommonly transcendent and peculiar, it is brevity of diction; which, in a few instances, and those perhaps pardonable, has occasioned obscurity. It is hardly to be imagined how much sense, how much thinking,

how much observation on human life, is condensed together in a small compass. He was so accustomed to confine his thoughts in rhyme, that he tells us he could express them more shortly this way than in prose itself. On its first publication Pope did not own it, and it was given by the public to Lord Paget, Dr. Young, Dr. Desaguliers, and others. Even Swift seems to have been deceived. There is a remarkable passage in one of his letters: "I confess I did never imagine you were so deep in morals, or that so many and excellent rules could be produced so advantageously and agreeably in that science, from any one head. I confess in some places I was forced to read twice. I believe I told you before what the Duke of D——— said to me on that occasion; how a judge here, who knows you, told him, that, on the first reading those Essays, he was much pleased, but found some lines a little dark; on the second, most of them cleared up, and his pleasure increased; on the third, he had no doubt remaining, and then he admired the whole."

The subject of this Essay is a vindication of Providence; in which the poet proposes to prove, that, of all possible systems, Infinite Wisdom has formed the best: that in such a system, coherence, union, subordination, are necessary; and if so, that appearances of evil, both moral and natural, are also necessary and unavoidable: that the seeming defects and blemishes in the universe conspire to its general beauty: that as all parts in an animal are not eyes; and as in a city, comedy, or picture, all ranks, characters, and colours are not equal or alike; even so excesses and contrary qualities contribute to the proportion and harmony of the universal system: that it is not strange that we should not be able to discover perfection and order in every instance; because, in an infinity of things mutually relative, a mind which sees not infinitely, can see nothing fully. This doctrine was inculcated by Plato and the Stoics, but more amply and particularly by the later Platonists, and by Antoninus and Simplicius.

In illustrating his subject, Pope has been much more deeply indebted to the Theodicée of Leibnitz, to Archbishop King's Origin of Evil, and to the Moralists of Lord Shaftesbury, (particularly to the last,) than to the philosophers above mentioned. The late Lord Bathurst repeatedly assured me, that he had read the whole scheme of the Essay on Man, in the hand-writing of Bolingbroke, and drawn up in a series of propositions, which Pope

was to amplify, versify, and illustrate. In doing which, our poet, it must be confessed, left several passages so expressed, as to be favourable to fatalism and necessity, notwithstanding all the pains that can be taken, and the artful turns that can be given to those passages, to place them on the side of religion, and make them coincide with the fundamental doctrines of revelation. How could Pope, in the letter which he wrote to Racine, the son, 1742, venture to say, that his opinions were exactly conformable to those of Pascal, who, throughout all his Thoughts, is incessantly inculcating the absolute necessity of believing that man is in a fallen and degraded state; an opinion which is strongly denied in every line of the Essay on Man? And which opinion of Pope, Racine has justly stated in the following lines; *La Religion, Chant* 2:—

Quelque abstrait raisonneur, qui ne se plaint de rien,
Dans son flegme Anglican, repondra, "Tout est bien.
Le grand Ordonnateur dont le dessein si sage,
De tant de d'êtres divers ne forme qu'un ouvrage,
Nous place à notre rang pour orner son tableau."

Pope has indeed inadvertently borrowed some passages from Pascal, but they have only served to make this system more inconsistent; for how can man be a "chaos of thought and passion all confused, and yet be as perfect a being as he ought to be?" The doctrine obviously intended to be inculcated in this Essay is, "That the dispensations of Providence in the distribution of good and evil, in this life, stand in no need of any hypothesis to justify them; all is adjusted in the most perfect order; whatever is, is right; and we have no occasion to call in the notion of a future life to vindicate the ways of God to man, because they are fully and sufficiently benevolent and just in the present." If we cannot subscribe, on one hand, to Dr. Warburton's opinions, "that these epistles have a precision, force, and closeness of connection rarely to be met with, even in the most formal treatises of philosophy;" yet neither can we assent to the severe sentence that Dr. Johnson has passed on the other hand; namely, "that penury of knowledge, and vulgarity of sentiment, were never so happily disguised as in this Essay; the reader feels his mind full, though he learns nothing; and, when he meets it in its new array, no longer knows the talk of his mother and his nurse."

It has been alleged that Pope did not fully comprehend the drift of the system communicated to him by Bolingbroke; but the

following remarkable words of his intimate friend, Mr. Jonathan Richardson, a man of known integrity and honour, clearly evince that he did: "As for this Essay on Man, as I was witness to the whole conduct of it in writing, and actually have his original manuscripts for it, from the first scratches of the four books, to the several finished copies (of his own neat and elegant writing these last); all which, with the manuscript of his Essay on Criticism, and several of his other works, he gave me himself, for the pains I took in collating the whole with the printed editions, at his request, on my having proposed to him the making an edition of his works in the manner of Boileau's. As to this noblest of his works, I know that he never dreamed of the scheme he afterwards adopted; perhaps for good reasons; for he had taken terror about the clergy, and Warburton himself, at the general alarm of its fatalism and deistical tendency; of which, however, we talked with him (my father and I) frequently at Twickenham, without his appearing to understand it otherwise, or even thinking to alter those passages, which he suggested as what might seem the most exceptionable."

To this testimony of Richardson, which is decisive, I will now add, that Lord Lyttelton, with his usual frankness and ingenuity, assured me, that he had frequently talked with Pope on the subject, whose opinions were at that time conformable to his own; before he had written his Observations on the Conversion of St. Paul, when he and his friends (not excepting Mr. Gilbert West) were, as he most candidly confessed, too much inclined to deism, but had fortunately become a most serious and earnest believer of Christianity. Is it not more probable and reasonable to suppose, that Pope might also change his opinion, though, at the time of writing the Essay on Man, he was tinctured with principles of another kind? and that he was equally in earnest when he was a disciple of Bolingbroke, as he afterwards was when he became a disciple of Warburton? It is incredible that he should not be acquainted with the objections that Bolingbroke held against revealed religion; which objections are perpetually repeated, and pervade all his works. But Pope might not indeed know the real opinions of his guide concerning a particular important topic—the moral attributes of the Deity. These two cases are widely different; and there lies a vast space betwixt these two species of infidelity. A man may be unhappily and unjustly prejudiced against the

Christian religion, and yet be fully and firmly persuaded of the belief of a God, and his moral attributes. Mr. Harte more than once assured me, that he had seen the pressing letter Dr. Young wrote to Pope, urging him to write something on the side of revelation; to which he alluded in the first Night-thought:

" O had he press'd his theme, pursu'd the track
Which opens out of darkness into day!
O had he mounted on his wing of fire,
Soar'd when I sink, and sung immortal man!"

And when Harte frequently made the same request, he used to answer, " No, no! you have already done it;" alluding to Harte's Essay on Reason, which Harte thought a lame apology, and hardly serious. With respect to what has just been mentioned, that Pope was not acquainted with the opinions of his philosophic guide, on the subject of the moral attributes of the Deity, it seems rather strange and incredible that he should not understand the following, among many other passages, to this purpose:

" Clarke, after repeating over and over all the moral attributes, that they are the same in God as they are in our ideas, and that he who denies them to be so, may as well deny the divine physical attributes, insists only on two of the former, on those of justice and goodness. He was much in the right to contract the generality of his assertion. The absurdity of ascribing temperance, for instance, or fortitude, to God, would have been too gross and too risible, even to eyes that prejudice had blinded the most. But that of ascribing justice and goodness to him, according to our notions of them, might be better covered, and was enough for his purpose, though not less really absurd." Vol. iv. p. 298. It is somewhat remarkable, that this very opinion, that we have no clear and adequate ideas of God's moral attributes, is strongly maintained by that excellent man and writer, Archbishop King, in his sermon on Divine Predestination, 1709, which was answered by Anthony Collins, author of the Essay on Free-thinking. The person who wrote the spirited and elegant anonymous letter to Dr. Warburton on the supposed severity with which he was thought to have treated Lord Bolingbroke in the View of his Philosophy, was the late Lord Mansfield; and this letter was answered by Dr. Warburton, with much force and apparent mortification, in the Apology, prefixed to the last edition of this View.

Warton.

It is impossible to observe without regret, the attempts that have been made to demonstrate that this noble poem is founded on what are called *infidel* principles, and is unfavourable to the doctrines of Christianity. This idea, though often before expressed or insinuated, seems to have received its full sanction in the preceding observations of Dr. Warton, where, as well as in his notes to the Essay, he has been at great pains to shew, that this poem is favourable to *fatalism* and *necessity;* that the doctrine obviously intended to be inculcated is, that "all is adjusted in the most perfect order;" that "*whatever is, is right; and we have no occasion to call in the notion of a future life to vindicate the ways of God to man, because they are fully and sufficiently benevolent and just in the present.*" Not satisfied however, with this decisive expression of his own opinion, he has attacked that of Dr. Warburton, and has asserted, that "his attempt to reconcile the doctrines of the Essay on Man to the doctrines of revelation, is *the rashest adventure in which ever critic yet engaged;*" that "*this is, in truth, to divine, rather than to explain an author's meaning;*"* and again, that "he has disfigured and disgraced his edition of the works of Pope with many forced and far-sought interpretations, totally unsupported by the passages which they were brought to elucidate;† and that in particular, "he laboured in vain, and with an ill-grounded zeal, to take Pope out of the hands of the *Infidels.*"‡ Acting under such impressions, Dr. Warton has thought proper to exclude the Commentary of Warburton from his edition, and to accompany the Essay on Man with notes tending to confirm his own views of the subject; a measure, the propriety and justice of which may well be doubted, when it is considered, that such Commentary was written in the lifetime of Pope, and was received by him with the warmest expressions of approbation, as "a full solution of all such doubts and unfavourable constructions as could possibly arise in the perusal of his work." "You have made my system," says he, "as clear as I ought to have done, and could not. *It is indeed the same system as mine,* but illustrated with a ray of your own; as they say our natural body is the same

* Note on Essay on Criticism, Warton's Ed. vol. i. p. 174.
† General Advertisement prefixed to Warton's Ed. vol. 1
‡ Note on Essay on Man, Ep. i. ver. 16, Warton's Ed.

still, when it is glorified."* And again, shortly before his death: "I own the late encroachments upon my constitution make me willing to see the end of all further care about me or my works. I would rest for the one in a full resignation of my being, to be disposed of by the Father of all mercy; and for the other (though indeed a trifle, yet a trifle may be some example) I would commit them to the candour of a sensible and reflecting judge, rather than to the malice of every short-sighted and malevolent critic, or inadvertent or censorious reader; and no hand can set them in so good a light, or so well turn their best side to the day as your own."† After so decided a proof of approbation, it is surely carrying the authority of an editor to its highest pitch, to declare, that "the author's fond expectation of his Commentator's setting his works in the best light '*was extremely ill founded!*'" Are we to suppose that a person whose accuracy in expressing his own ideas was never exceeded by any writer, either ancient or modern, did not know his own meaning?—and is it fair or candid, when the author is no more, not only to discard the interpretation which he has himself expressly approved, but to impose upon his work a meaning against which he invariably protested in the strongest terms, and which, if he had thought it would have been adopted by posterity, would have embittered the latest moments of his life?

That the representation given by Warton of the doctrine intended to be inculcated by Pope in his Essay on Man, is erroneous, a few words will sufficiently demonstrate. Warton supposes, that Pope intended to assert that "*whatever is, is right;*" and that "*we have therefore no occasion to call in the notion of a future state, to justify the ways of God to man, because they are fully and sufficiently benevolent and just in the present;*" but Pope neither intended to make, nor has made any such assertion. His idea is, that whatever is, *is right—not* because every thing *is perfect here;* but because every thing is perfect when considered with regard to the great designs and purposes of the Creator, as well *here* as *elsewhere*, as well in *a future* as in *the present* state of being. It is indeed extraordinary that any misapprehension could have arisen,

* Pope to Warburton, Letter i.

† Pope to Warburton, Letter xxiv.

on a subject which he has taken the utmost care to explain, in the very commencement of his work:

> "Respecting man whatever wrong we call,
> May, must be right—*as relative to all.*
> In human works, tho' labour'd on with pain,
> A thousand movements scarce one purpose gain;
> In God's, one single can its end produce,
> Yet serves to second too some other use.
> So man, who *here seems principal* alone,
> Perhaps acts *second* to *some sphere unknown*,
> Touches some wheel, or verges to some goal;
> *'Tis but a part we see, and not the whole.*"
>
> Essay on Man, Ep. i. ver. 51.

From which it clearly appears, that in the apprehension of the poet *all would not be right*, if this world had not a relation to another state of being, and that *all is right*, only when considered *as relative to all.*

The foregoing observations may, perhaps, receive further illustration from an account of the different doctrines of Pope and Bolingbroke, as given by Ruffhead, in his life of Pope; but which bears too evident marks of the acuteness and style of Warburton, to allow us to attribute it to any other writer:

"Mr. Pope's Essay on Man is a *real* vindication of Providence against libertines and atheists; who quarrel with the present constitution of things, and deny a future state. To these he answers, that *whatever is, is right;* and he assigns this reason, that *we see only a part of the moral system, and not the whole.* Therefore these irregularities, serving to great purposes, such as the fuller manifestation of God's goodness and justice, they *are right.*

"On the other hand Lord Bolingbroke's Essays are a *pretended* vindication of Providence against an *imaginary* confederacy between *divines* and *atheists;* who use a common principle, namely, *the irregularities of God's moral government here;* the one, to establish *a future state*; the other, to discredit the *being of a God.*

"His Lordship, who opposes their different conclusions, endeavours to overthrow their common principle by his friend's maxim, that *whatever is, is right;* not because the present state of our *moral* world (which is part only of a general system,) is ne-

cessary for the greater perfection of the whole, but because *our moral world is an entire system of itself.*

"His Lordship applies the maxim no better (as might be expected) than he understands it. Mr. Pope, as has been observed, urges it against atheists and libertines, who say that the constitution of things is faulty; so that the reply, *whatever is, is right*, is pertinent in him. His Lordship on the other hand directs it against *divines*, who say, indeed, that this constitution is imperfect, if considered separately, because it is a part only of a whole, but are as far as his Lordship from calling it *faulty:* therefore the reply, that *whatever is, is right*, is, in him, impertinent.

"In a word, the poet directs it against atheists and libertines, in support of religion, properly so called; the philosopher against divines, in support of religion, improperly so called, namely, NATURALISM; and the success is answerable. Mr. Pope's argument is manly, systematical, and convincing; Lord Bolingbroke's confused, prevaricating, and inconsistent."

With respect to the passage cited by Dr. Warton from the younger Richardson, in which it is said that Pope "never dreamt of the scheme he afterwards adopted," but "that he had taken terror about the Clergy and Warburton himself, at the general alarm of its fatalism and deistical tendency;" whence it is inferred, that considerable alterations were made in the purport and tendency of the poem; it may with safety be asserted that this inference *cannot be true.* The Essay on Man, as it now appears, could at no time have existed in any form very different with respect to its doctrinal tenets from what it is at present; so that any passages tending to the inculcation of *infidel principles*, or to *discredit Christianity*, would not only have been inconsistent with the general purpose of it, but totally contradictory to the conclusion, which points to the Christian revelation as the completion of the system. To suppose that Pope had written a poem in order to promote the cause of infidelity, but which he afterwards altered in such a manner as entirely to change its object and tendency, is absurd, as in such case he must have altered the texture and construction of his whole work. The younger Richardson appears to have been an honest, but a weak man, who, although he was employed by Pope to collate his works with the printed editions, was unequal to judge of the operations of a mind like that of Pope. If, as he states, there existed so entire a discrepancy between

the Essay on Man as published, and the original manuscripts, all of which, "*from the first scratches of the four books to the several finished copies*," Richardson had in his possession, how happens it that he did not gratify the curiosity of the public with some instances of those important alterations, which we are told Pope was induced to make, even against his own judgment, in order to prevent those consequences which it seems had excited so much alarm in his mind?

Yet more extraordinary is the testimony brought forwards by Dr. Warton himself; who informs us, that Lord Lyttelton assured him, that he had frequently talked with Pope, whose opinions were *at that time* conformable to his own, which he candidly confessed were too much inclined to *deism*; although he had fortunately become a most serious and earnest believer of Christianity. Whence Dr. Warton infers, that it was probable "Pope also changed his opinion, though at the time of writing the Essay on Man he was tinctured with principles of another kind; and that he was equally in earnest when he was a disciple of Bolingbroke as he afterwards was when he became a disciple of Warburton." That Pope ever changed his religious opinions, and particularly on so important a point, is a supposition entirely contrary to the whole tenor of his writings. What a person may be supposed to have said, or to have assented to in conversation, may have been misunderstood, and consequently may be unintentionally misrepresented; but what he has *written* is open to the examination and decision of the world at large, who will found their judgment upon it, and not upon *hearsay evidence* and *vague reports*, which are in direct opposition to the avowed sentiments of the author.

Were we to inquire into the motives which have given rise to the imputations thrown out against the author of the Essay on Man, as having advanced doctrines unfavourable to revelation, we shall find that they arise chiefly from his not having rendered his work subservient to certain opinions, which those who have censured him have thought proper to espouse, as *exclusively* the test of Christianity.

In this spirit is the remark of Dr. Warton on the lines,

> "Then say not man's imperfect, heaven's in fault;
> Say rather, man's as perfect as he ought."
>
> Essay on Man, Ep. i. ver. 69.

" Consequently," says Warton, " man is not in *a lapsed or degenerate state;* he is as perfect a being *as ever his Creator intended him to be;* nor, consequently, did he stand in need of *any redemption or atonement.*"* To which it may be replied, that Pope was professedly writing a philosophical work, in which it would have been impossible for him to advert either to the Mosaic account of the fall, or to the peculiar tenets and doctrines of Christianity. Nor is it perhaps certain that he held the doctrine of the atonement in the rigorous sense in which it is inculcated by the Lutheran and Calvinistic writers, as he might be a very good Catholic without such opinion, it being the express doctrine of the Roman religion that a *legal* obedience or conformity to the church, together with good works, is sufficient for salvation.

In a similar spirit of sectarianism, the younger Racine, in his poem, *Sur la Religion,* has alluded to Pope in the following lines,—

" Sans doute qu'à ces mots des bords de la Tamise,
Quelque abstrait raisonneur, qui ne se plaint de rien,
Dans son flegme Anglican, repondra, " *Tout est bien.*
Le grand Ordonnateur dont le dessein si sage,
De tant d'êtres divers ne forme qu'un ouvrage,
Nous place à notre rang pour orner son tableau," &c.

It would surely be difficult to conceive how this sentiment of Pope, as quoted by the French writer, could have given him offence; but it must be recollected that one chief object of the poem of Racine is to demonstrate the wretched condition of man as occasioned by *the fall;* and therefore whatever represents the Creator as infinitely wise and benevolent, and as having formed all things *for the best,* is considered by him as the language of an " *abstract reasoner, who has no complaints to make;*" and he is accused of "*flegme Anglican,*" or *English* stupidity, because he does not, in a philosophical work, enter upon subjects which are confessedly beyond the power of philosophy to explain.

The real objection then to this Essay is, that the author has not thought proper to render it subservient to the support of any one particular sect of Christianity in exclusion to the rest. This plan he adopted intentionally, and upon principle. Although brought up in, and professing the Roman catholic faith, there was no doc-

* Note on Essay on Man, Ep. i. ver. 70.

trine that he held in greater abhorrence than that which would exclude those who do not profess that faith, from the mercy of God; and it is not therefore likely that he would become the advocate of the bigotted and intolerant of any other sect, who might consider their own dogmas as indispensably necessary to salvation.

Amongst the objections that have been brought against the principles attributed to this work, it has been said or insinuated that it favours the system of Spinosa; as if all things were only a modification of one universal substance; and that it represents the whole course of things, to use the language of Johnson, as "a necessary concatenation of indissoluble fatality."* Such was the nature of the charge brought against the Essay on Man by M. de Crousaz; and Johnson himself asserts, that "in many passages a religious eye may discover expressions not very favourable *to morals* or *to liberty*."

If by this it be meant that Pope intended to inculcate any doubt of a supreme, self-existent, intelligent first cause, the creator of all things, no charge can be more unjust, as must appear to every unprejudiced reader by the whole tenor of the poem; in which God is represented, not as identified with, but as modifying and controlling matter—as He

> "——— whose hand the lightning forms,
> Who heaves old ocean, and who wings the storms."
>
> Essay on Man, Ep. i. ver. 157.

And again, most forcibly, when the Poet asserts,

> "God, in the nature of each being, founds
> Its proper bliss, and sets its proper bounds;
> But as *he fram'd the whole*, the whole to bless,
> On mutual wants built mutual happiness."
>
> Essay on Man, Ep. iii. ver. 109.

These passages can only be understood as referring to a supreme intelligent being, in whose whole creation, to use the still more decisive and conclusive language of the poet,

> "The *worker* from the *work* distinct was known."
>
> Essay on Man, Ep. iii. ver. 229.

It must also be a matter of surprise to those who have pe-

* Life of Pope.

rused this poem in the same spirit in which it was written, to find the author accused of inculcating doctrines unfavourable to the idea of a future state. With this view Dr. Warton has quoted in a note, a passage "from a MS. of the late learned printer, Mr. Bowyer." After adducing, as a proof of a future state, the dissatisfaction which the mind experiences in mere earthly things, the poet adds,

> "Hope springs eternal in the human breast;
> Man never is, but always to be blest;
> The soul, uneasy, and confin'd *from home*,
> Rests and expatiates in a world to come."
>
> Essay on Man, Ep. i. ver. 95.

On these two last lines, Mr. Bowyer observes, "In the old editions, it was, 'confin'd *at home*,' which was altered at the persuasion of the divine, *against* the sense of the poet. The point to be illustrated is, that hope is implanted in man, to enable him to bear all the evils of life, *though it is merely visionary, and has no foundation.*

> What *future* bliss he gives not thee to know,
> But gives that hope to be thy blessing *now.*
>
> Essay on Man, Ep. i. ver. 93.

Thus man, confined on his own earth, *dreams of imaginary mansions* in another world. Hope supplies the reality of them. He hopes, upon the same ground as the Indian does, for a heaven, where his dog shall accompany him. Sorry am I to give this view of the author's creed; *but it is too true a representation of it;* &c."* This passage is as erroneous in its premises as it is unjust in its conclusion. The point to be illustrated *is not*, "that *hope is implanted in man to enable him to bear the evils of this life, though it is merely visionary, and without foundation,*" but that it was given us as an earnest of a future state of existence; a sentiment so deeply fixed in human nature, that it is felt and acknowledged by the poor Indian, who "sees God in clouds, and hears him in the wind," and that such hope is a consolation to the soul, even in its present state, whilst it is uneasy and confined *from its home*, and *rests and expatiates in a world to come.* It is not said by Pope, that the hopes of futurity are all a dream; he only asserts, as St. Paul had done before, that *we do not know the nature of the bliss which a future state affords.* That Pope intended to

* Note on Essay on Man, Ep. i. ver. 97. Warton's Ed.

change the sense of the passage by adopting the alteration of Warburton, it would be absurd to suppose. He only meant to strengthen it. It was however sufficiently evident, as it before stood, that by the expression *at home*, he meant *our temporary or present home*, as contradistingui hed from our *future*, and the alteration was merely a concession to prevent cavils, and by no means an improvement. Thus, according to the moral system which the author has undertaken to develop, the certainty of a future state may even be inferred from the general conviction of it entertained by all mankind, and from the necessity of such a state to the completion of *the great design*, without which the present state of being would only be an imperfection and a blot.

That the certainty of a future state is not only uniformly admitted and reasoned upon in this Essay as an established and indisputable tenet, but is considered as essential to the completion of that great order of things of which we are only permitted to see a portion here below, appears from many passages of the poem.

> "Of man what see we, but his station *here*,
> From which to reason or to which refer?"
>
> Essay on Man, Ep. i. ver. 19.

evidently implying that there is more to be known than is compatible with our present situation. In the same spirit we are told to

> "Hope humbly then; with trembling pinions soar;
> Wait the great teacher Death, and God adore."
>
> Essay on Man, Ep. i. ver. 91.

But if death be the termination of our existence, this, and all similar passages would be futile and ridiculous. This great union that combines the present with the future, and will perhaps enable us to know more than our mere mortal faculties are enabled to comprehend, is more decisively referred to towards the close of the poem, as

> —— "that chain that *links th' immense design*,
> Joins *heaven and earth*, and *mortal and divine;*
> Sees that no being any bliss can know,
> But touches *some above and some below*."
>
> Essay on Man, Ep. iv. ver. 333.

After perusing these, and various other passages to the same effect, it is surely extraordinary that attempts should have been made by the Commentators of Pope, on the pages of his own

works, to insinuate that he did not himself believe in the doctrine of a future state.

It is perhaps with greater plausibility, but with equal injustice, that this poem has been represented as containing sentiments favourable to fatalism and necessity, thereby destroying the idea of the freedom of the human will, and overthrowing the barriers between vice and virtue. This idea seems to have arisen from a too confined and partial view of the manner in which the poet has treated his subject, and from judging of it by detached parts and expressions, instead of comprehending the tenor and result of the whole. Those who have attempted to substantiate this objection have in general adverted only to one part of the Essay, that in which the author undertakes to demonstrate the regularity and harmony of the established order of things, and have overlooked that portion of the work in which he contends for the freedom of human action, and the consequent responsibility of man; the compatibility of which apparently irreconcileable opinions it is the chief object of this work to demonstrate.

This objection has however been recently countenanced by a distinguished living author, whose observations cannot fail of producing a great effect on the public opinion. It is remarked by Mr. Dugald Stewart, that various writers in their great zeal to "*vindicate the ways of God,*" have been led to hazard principles more dangerous in their consequences than the prejudices and errors which it was their aim to correct. "Amongst this number," says he, "must be included the author of the Essay on Man; who, from a want of precision in his metaphysical ideas, has unconsciously fallen into various expressions equally inconsistent with each other, and with his own avowed opinion;" as a proof of which, he instances the lines,

> "If plagues and earthquakes break not heaven's design,
> Why then a Borgia or a Catiline?"
>
> Essay on Man, Ep. i. ver. 155.

"This," says he, "approaches very nearly to the optimism of Leibnitz, and has certainly nothing in common with that of Plato," according to whom, "every thing is right so far as it is the work of God; the creation of beings endowed with free will, and consequently liable to moral delinquency, and the government of the world by general laws, from which occasional evils must result, furnishing no objection to the perfection of the universe, to which

a satisfactory reply may not be found in the partial and narrow views of it to which our faculties are at present confined; but he held, at the same time, that although the permission of moral evil does not detract from the goodness of God, it is nevertheless imputable to man as a fault, and renders him justly obnoxious to punishment."*

Surely the scope and tendency of the work of Pope could not have been more precisely and truly defined, than in the passage last cited. The lines here objected to, are so far from being liable to the censure applied to them, that they are in perfect accordance with the doctrines before stated, and are merely used as an illustration of the position, "that from the government of the world by general laws occasional evils must result." Pope by no means asserts, *that Borgia and Catiline are not morally culpable.* He only contends, that as man is not created perfect, there must somewhere be imperfection; but he no where supposes that this detracts from the goodness of God, or that it is not imputable to man as a fault.

The system of Pope is therefore precisely that described by Mr. Stewart, as having "been in all ages maintained (under a variety of forms) by the wisest and best philosophers, who, while they were anxious to vindicate the perfections of God, saw the importance of stating their doctrine in a manner not inconsistent with man's free will and moral agency."

Nor can we admit with Mr. Stewart, that the lines of Pope,

> "The *general order* since the whole began
> Is kept in nature, and is kept in man,"
>
> Essay on Man, Ep. i. ver. 171.

are inconsistent with the lines,

> "What makes all physical and moral ill?
> There deviates nature, and here wanders will."
>
> Essay on Man, Ep. iv. ver. 111.

The two passages put together, containing only an assertion, that notwithstanding the aberrations physical or moral, in *particular* instances, the *general order* of things still continues unimpaired. These observations will probably be thought sufficient to shew, that these detached passages in Pope are not in fact in-

* Dissertation to Pref. to Suppl. of Encyclop. Britan. Part II. p. 46.

consistent either with each other, or with his general system; but when we extend our views so as to comprehend the whole object of the Essay, we shall find that these are only particular parts which, like strong touches in the picture of a great artist, when viewed distinct from the rest, seem incorrect and discoloured, but when taken as a part of the whole appear indispensable to its harmony, beauty, and effect.

That this is the true construction of the poem will, however, more clearly appear from considering that portion of it, in which the poet positively asserts *the free agency, and responsibility of man.* This is in fact the principal object of his second Epistle; in which after adverting to the limits placed by nature to the exertion of the human faculties, he enters upon an inquiry into the operation of those passions, on the proper regulation of which our happiness here and hereafter so essentially depends. These passions, however, can only be exercised within certain bounds, and cannot in their consequences derange the great system of things, and the established order and harmony of the universe—thus,

" Each individual seeks a several goal;
But HEAVEN'S great view is ONE, and that the whole.
That counter-works each folly and caprice;
That disappoints th' effect of every vice."—Ep. ii. ver. 237.

And thus, " *th' eternal art educing good from ill,*" is constantly employed, not only in counterbalancing the effects of evil by an equal quantity of good; but in producing ON THE WHOLE, *a much greater quantity* of good than could possibly have existed without it.

But although the powers and faculties of man are circumscribed by the great system of things, and have only a limited sphere of action; yet these limits are amply sufficient to admit of a great variety of conduct, in which every individual acts according as his own interest, real or imaginary, leads him. He cannot, indeed, derange the course of the planets, nor arrest the fury of the winds, nor prevent the return of the tide, but he can effect considerable changes within the bounds prescribed, both in the natural and moral world; and according as he employs the faculties with which he is endowed, he may be said to be wise or foolish, virtuous or vicious. What the effects of his virtues or his vices may be upon the general system of things, it is out of his power either to prescribe or foresee; and therefore it neither adds to the merit

of the one, nor diminishes the turpitude of the other. This modification or approximation of virtue and vice, by which good is *upon the whole* produced, is exquisitely touched upon in his second Epistle:

" As fruits ungrateful to the planter's care,
On savage stocks inserted learn to bear;
The surest virtues thus from passions shoot,
Wild Nature's vigour working at the root.
What crops of wit and honesty appear
From spleen, from obstinacy, hate, or fear!
See anger, zeal and fortitude supply;
Even avarice, prudence; sloth, philosophy, &c."

Essay on Man, Ep. ii. ver. 181.

After elucidating this point by examples drawn from human characters, he adds,

" Extremes in nature equal ends produce,
In man they join to some mysterious use;
Tho' each by turns the other's bound invade
As in some well wrought picture, light and shade;
And oft so mix, the difference is too nice
Where ends the virtue or begins the vice."

Essay on Man, Ep. ii. ver. 205.

Lest, however, it should be supposed, from this most correct and accurate statement, that the poet intended to confound virtue and vice together, and consequently to deny the responsibility of man as a free agent, he indignantly exclaims,

" Fools! who from hence into the notion fall,
That vice or virtue there is none at all.
If white and black blend, soften, and unite
A thousand ways, is there no black or white?
Ask your own heart, and nothing is so plain;
'Tis to mistake them costs the time and pain."

Essay on Man, Ep. ii. ver. 211.

From which it is clearly to be understood that the universe, as well intellectual as material, is, as the work of a Supreme Creator, subservient to the laws which he has imposed upon it, and which are essential to its existence and perfection; but that notwithstanding this, there are in rational beings a freedom of will and choice of action, which, although they cannot in their result overthrow the established order of nature, may be virtuous or vicious accord-

ing as they are employed. That these powers can only be exercised within certain bounds, is essential to the very nature of a created or finite being; but it will scarcely be denied that these bounds afford a space sufficiently large for the exercise of them, and for that improvement in knowledge, virtue, and true religion, which is alluded to at the close of the Essay, where we are told the virtuous man—

" Learns, from this union of the rising whole,
The *first, last purpose of the human soul;*
And knows where *faith, law, morals,* all began,
All end, in *love of God,* and *love of man.*
For him alone, Hope leads from goal to goal,
And opens still, and opens on his soul;
Till lengthened on to *faith,* and unconfin'd,
It pours the bliss that fills up all the mind."

Essay on Man, Book iv. ver. 335.

Having thus demonstrated that the highest inductions of human reason terminate in religious faith, he proceeds to point out the particular system of religion which is thus inculcated; in which it would be impossible not to perceive the mild and beneficent features of Christianity.

" Self-love, thus push'd from social to divine,
Gives thee *to make thy neighbour's blessing thine.*
Is this too little for thy boundless heart?
Extend it—*let thine enemies have part;*
Grasp the whole worlds of reason, life, and sense,
In one close *System of Benevolence;*
Happier as kinder, in whate'er degree,
And height of bliss but *height of charity.*"

Essay on Man, Ep. iv. ver. 351.

And thus, as Warburton has justly remarked, " the poet has vindicated the dignity of human nature, and the philosophical truth of the Christian religion."

We are informed by Spence, that Pope had written an address to Jesus Christ, but omitted it by the advice of bishop Berkeley.*

* " In the moral poem I had written an address to our Saviour, imitated from Lucretius's Compliment to Epicurus; but omitted it by the advice of Dean Berkeley."

Spence's Anec. Singer's Ed. p. 142.

When we consider the propriety and delicacy which he has manifested on every subject which he has undertaken, we cannot but regret the loss of a passage which would have afforded him the finest possible opportunity of displaying all the dignity, pathos, and devotion, of which he was so eminently capable.

The publication of the Essay on Man was attended with some peculiar circumstances, of which an account has been given in the Life of the Author prefixed to the present edition (chap. viii.); where an attempt is also made to ascertain, what degree of credit is due to the generally received opinion, that Pope derived the materials for this poem from Lord Bolingbroke, and that his chief merit consists in having transferred the prose of that nobleman into correct and beautiful verse. What has there been stated will, it is presumed, sufficiently demonstrate, that the Essay on Man was not only *commenced*, but that a great portion of it was *actually written* before Lord Bolingbroke had put pen to paper on the subject, and that his Lordship continued his work long *after the four Epistles of the Essay on Man had been completed and published;*—that Lord Bolingbroke has himself repeatedly acknowledged that the work of Pope was *an original* for which he *was not indebted to any other author;* and that the respective works of Lord Bolingbroke and Pope were considered both by themselves and their correspondents, as wholly distinct from each other. On the present occasion it has been thought necessary briefly to recur to these statements, because Dr. Warton has pointed out several passages in the ensuing poem, wherein he conceives that Pope has adopted the sentiments, and even the language, of Lord Bolingbroke; but this coincidence it must be observed, is by no means conclusive as to the question, which of the two writers has imitated the other—a question which can only be satisfactorily decided by shewing which of the two works was first written.

THE DESIGN.

HAVING proposed to write some pieces on Human Life and Manners, such as, to use my Lord Bacon's expression, *come home to men's business and bosoms*, I thought it more satisfactory to begin with considering *Man* in the abstract, his *Nature* and his *State;* since, to prove any moral duty, to enforce any moral precept, or to examine the perfection or imperfection of any creature whatsoever, it is necessary first to know what *condition* and *relation* it is placed in, and what is the proper *end* and *purpose* of its *being*.

The science of Human Nature is, like all other sciences, reduced to a *few clear points*. There are not *many certain truths* in this world. It is therefore in the Anatomy of the Mind as in that of the Body; more good will accrue to mankind by attending to the large, open, and perceptible parts, than by studying too much such finer nerves and vessels, the conformations and uses of which will for ever escape our observation. The *disputes* are all upon these last, and, I will venture to say, they have less sharpened the *wits* than the *hearts* of men against each other, and have diminished the practice, more than advanced the theory, of Morality. If I could flatter myself that this Essay has any merit, it is in steering betwixt the extremes of doctrines seemingly opposite, in passing over terms utterly unintelligible, and in forming a *temperate*, yet not *inconsistent*, and a *short*, yet not *imperfect*, system of Ethics.

This I might have done in prose; but I chose verse, and even rhyme, for two reasons. The one will appear obvious; that principles, maxims, or precepts so written, both strike the reader more strongly at first, and are more easily retained by him afterwards. The other may seem odd, but

is true. I found I could express them more *shortly* this way than in prose itself; and nothing is more certain, than that much of the *force* as well as *grace* of arguments or instructions depends on their *conciseness*. I was unable to treat this part of my subject more in *detail*, without becoming dry and tedious; or more *poetically*, without sacrificing perspicuity to ornament, without wandering from the precision, or breaking the chain of reasoning. If any man can unite all these without diminution of any of them, I freely confess he will compass a thing above my capacity.

What is now published, is only to be considered as a *general Map* of MAN, marking out no more than the *greater parts*, their *extent*, their *limits*, and their *connection*, but leaving the particular to be more fully delineated in the charts which are to follow. Consequently, these Epistles in their progress (if I have health and leisure to make any progress) will be less dry, and more susceptible of poetical ornament. I am here only opening the *fountains*, and clearing the passage. To deduce the *rivers*, to follow them in their course, and to observe their effects, may be a task more agreeable. *P.*

ARGUMENT OF EPISTLE I.

Of the Nature and State of Man, with respect to the UNIVERSE.

OF Man *in the abstract.*—I. *That we can judge only with regard to our* own system, *being ignorant of the* relations *of systems and things,* Ver. 17, &c. II. *That Man is not to be deemed* imperfect, *but a Being suited to his* place *and* rank *in the creation, agreeable to the* general Order *of things, and conformable to* Ends *and* Relations *to him unknown,* Ver. 35, &c. III. *That it is partly upon his* ignorance *of* future *events, and partly upon the* hope *of a* future *state, that all his happiness in the present depends,* Ver. 77, &c. IV. *The* pride *of aiming at more knowledge, and pretending to more perfection, the cause of Man's error and misery. The* impiety *of putting himself in the place of* God, *and judging of the fitness or unfitness, perfection or imperfection, justice or injustice, of his dispensations,* Ver. 109, &c. V. *The* absurdity *of conceiting himself the* final cause *of the creation, or expecting that perfection in the* moral *world, which is not in the* natural, Ver. 131, &c. VI. *The* unreasonableness *of his complaints against* Providence, *while on the one hand, he demands the perfections of the Angels, and on the other, the bodily qualifications of the Brutes; though, to possess any of the* sensitive faculties *in a higher degree, would render him miserable,* Ver. 173, &c. VII. *That throughout the whole visible world, an universal* order *and* gradation *in the sensual and mental faculties is observed, which causes a* subordination *of creature to creature, and of all creatures to Man. The gradations of* sense, instinct, thought, reflection, reason: *that Reason alone countervails all the other faculties,* Ver. 207. VIII. *How much further this* order *and* subordination *of living creatures may ex-*

tend, above and below us; were any part of which broken, not that part only, but the whole connected creation *must be destroyed,* Ver. 233. IX. *The* extravagance, madness, *and* pride *of such a desire,* Ver. 250. X. *The consequence of all, the* absolute submission *due to Providence, both as to our* present *and* future state, Ver. 281, &c. *to the end.*

AN

ESSAY ON MAN:

WITH THE COMMENTARY OF WILLIAM WARBURTON, D. D.

EPISTLE I.

AWAKE, my ST. JOHN! leave all meaner things
To low ambition, and the pride of kings.

COMMENTARY.

THE opening of this Poem [in fifteen lines] is taken up in giving an account of the subject; which, agreeably to the title, is an ESSAY on MAN, or a Philosophical Inquiry into his *Nature* and *End*, his *Passions* and *Pursuits*.

The exordium relates to the whole work, of which the *Essay on Man* was only the first book. The sixth, seventh, and eighth lines allude to the subjects of this *Essay*, viz. the general Order and Design of Providence; the Constitution of the Human Mind; the Origin, Use, and End of the Passions and Affections, both selfish and social; and the wrong Pursuits of Happiness in Power, Pleasure, &c. The tenth, eleventh, twelfth, &c. have relation to the subjects of the books intended to follow, viz. the Characters and Capacities of Men, and the Limits of Science, which once transgressed, ignorance begins, and errors without end succeed. The thirteenth and fourteenth, to the Knowledge of Mankind, and the various Manners of the Age.

The

NOTES.

Ver. 1. *Awake, my St. John! &c.*] The warmth of friendship with which this Poem is inscribed to Lord Bolingbroke, and the address at the close, in which the Poet denominates him, "*his guide, philosopher, and friend*," have led to an opinion that the substance of this Essay was the work of his Lordship; and that the only merit of Pope was that of transferring it into verse. In

writing

Let us, since life can little more supply
Than just to look about us and to die,

COMMENTARY.

The Poet tells us next (line 16th) with what design he wrote, viz.

" To vindicate the ways of God to Man."

The men he writes against, he frequently informs us, are such as *weigh their opinions against Providence*, (ver. 114.), such as *cry, If Man's unhappy, God's unjust*, (ver. 118.), or such as fall into the notion, *that Vice and Virtue there is none at all.* (Ep. ii. ver. 212.). This occasions the poet to divide his vindication of the ways of God into two parts; in the first of which he gives direct answers to those objections which libertine men, on a view of the disorders arising from the perversity of the human will, have intended against Providence: and in the second, he obviates all those objections, by a true delineation of human nature, or a general, but exact, *map of Man.* The first epistle is employed in the management of the first part of this dispute; and the three following, in the discussion of the second. So that this whole book constitutes a complete *Essay on Man,* written for the best purpose, *to vindicate the ways of God.*

NOTES.

writing the Life of Pope, this important question unavoidably presented itself to the examination of the editor; and the result of his inquiries will be found in the eighth chapter of the Life, in the first volume of the present edition, where he has endeavoured to shew, from the comparison of dates, and the evidence of contemporary documents,

I. That the Essay on Man was begun, and a great part of it completed, several years *before* Lord Bolingbroke had begun to write on the subject.

II. That Lord Bolingbroke continued to write his philosophical work, long *after* Pope had published his Essay.

III. That his Lordship has himself explicitly stated, that the Poem of Pope was an *original*, and not imitated *from any other author.*

IV. That the occasional resemblances that are found between these works, may therefore rather be considered as imitations of Pope by Lord Bolingbroke, than as imitations of his Lordship by Pope.

Expatiate free o'er all this scene of Man;
A mighty maze, but not without a plan;
A wild, where weeds and flow'rs promiscuous shoot,
Or garden, tempting with forbidden fruit.
Together let us beat this ample field,
Try what the open, what the covert yield;
The latent tracts, the giddy heights explore
Of all who blindly creep, or sightless soar;
Eye Nature's walks, shoot Folly as it flies,
And catch the manners living as they rise;
Laugh where we must, be candid where we can;
But vindicate the ways of God to Man.

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Ver. 12. *Of all who blindly creep, &c.*] *i. e.* Those who only follow the blind guidance of their passions; or those who leave behind them common sense and sober reason, in their high flights through the regions of Metaphysics. Both which follies are exposed in the fourth epistle, where the popular and philosophical errors concerning Happiness are detected. The figure is taken from *animal* life. *Warburton.*

Ver. 13. *Eye Nature's walks,*] These metaphors, drawn from the field sports of setting and shooting, seem much below the dignity of the subject, and an unnatural mixture of the ludicrous and serious. *Warton.*

This whole passage is one of the happiest specimens of poetical dexterity in the conduct of an allusion, without aberration or incongruity, that has fallen under my observation. *Dryden*, perhaps, in his Absalom and Achitophel, part ii. might be present to our author's recollection at this place.

——— "while he with watchful eye
Observes, and *shoots their treasons as they fly.*"

Wakefield.

Ver. 15. *Laugh where we must, &c.*] Intimating, that human *follies* are so strangely absurd, that it is not in the power of the most *compassionate*, on some occasions, to restrain their mirth; and

I. Say first, of God above, or Man below,
What can we reason, but from what we know?
Of Man, what see we but his station here,
From which to reason, or to which refer? 20

COMMENTARY.

Ver. 17. *Say first, of God above, or Man below, &c.*] The poet having declared his *subject;* his *end of writing;* and the *quality of his adversaries;* proceeds (from ver. 16 to 23) to instruct us, *from whence* he intends to draw his arguments; namely, from the *visible* things of God in this system, to demonstrate the *invisible* things of God, his *eternal Power and Godhead.* And *why?* Because we can *reason only from what we know;* and as we *know* no more of *Man* than what we see of his station here, so we know no more of *God* than what we see of his dispensations in this station; being able to trace him no further than to the limits of our own system. This naturally leads the poet to exprobrate the miserable folly and impiety of pretending to pry into, and call in question, the profound dispensations of Providence: which reproof contains (from ver. 22 to 43) a sublime description of the omniscience of God, and the miserable blindness and presumption of Man.

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and that its *crimes* are so flagitious, that the most *candid* have seldom an opportunity, on this subject, to exercise their virtue.

Warburton.

Ver. 16. VINDICATE *the ways of God to Man.*] Milton's phrase, judiciously altered, who says, JUSTIFY *the ways of God to Man.* Milton was addressing himself to BELIEVERS, and delivering reasons or explaining the ways of God; this idea, the word *justify* precisely conveys. Pope was addressing himself to UNBELIEVERS, and exposing such of their objections whose ridicule and absurdity arises from the judicial blindness of the objectors; he, therefore, more fitly employs the word VINDICATE, which conveys the idea of a confutation attended with punishment. Thus, *suscipere* vindictam *Legis,* to undertake the defence of the law, implies punishing the violators of it. *Warburton.*

Ver. 19, 20. *Of Man, what see we but his station here,*
From which to reason, or to which refer?]

The sense is, "we see nothing of Man but as he stands at present in

Through worlds unnumber'd tho' the God be known,
'Tis ours to trace him only in our own.
He, who through vast immensity can pierce,
See worlds on worlds compose one universe,
Observe how system into system runs,
What other planets circle other suns,
What varied Being peoples ev'ry star,
May tell why Heav'n has made us as we are.
But of this frame, the bearings and the ties,
The strong connections, nice dependencies,

NOTES.

in his station here; from which station, all our reasonings on his *nature* and *end* must be drawn; and to this station they must all be referred." The consequence is, that our reasonings on his *nature* and *end* must needs be very imperfect. *Warburton.*

Ver. 21. *Through worlds unnumber'd, &c.*] Hunc cognoscimus solummodo per proprietates suas et attributa, et per sapientissimas et optimas rerum structuras et causas finales. *Newtoni Princ. Schol. gen. sub fin.* *Warburton.*

Ver. 29. *But of this frame, the bearings*] The whole doctrine of Plato is contained in this one short sentence: Μέρος μὲν ἕνεκα ὅλου, καὶ οὐχ' ὅλον ἕνεκα μέρους ἀπεργάζεται. See a very fine passage in A. Gellius, lib. vi. cap. 1. containing the opinion of Chrysippus on the origin of evil. *Warton.*

Ver. 30. *The strong connections, nice dependencies,*] The thought is very noble, and expressed with great beauty and philosophic exactness. The system of the Universe is a combination of *natural* and *moral* fitnesses, as the human system is of *body* and *spirit*. By the *strong connections*, therefore, the poet alluded to the *natural* part; and by the nice dependencies, to the *moral*. For the *Essay on Man* is not a system of NATURALISM, on the philosophy of Bolingbroke, but a system of NATURAL RELIGION, on the philosophy of Newton. Hence it is, that where he supposes disorders may tend to some greater good in the *natural* world, he supposes they may tend likewise to some greater good in the *moral*, as appears from these sublime images in the following lines:

"If

Gradations just, has thy pervading soul
Look'd through? or can a part contain the whole?
Is the great chain, that draws all to agree,
And drawn supports, upheld by God, or thee?
II. Presumptuous Man! the reason would'st thou find,
Why form'd so weak, so little, and so blind?
First, if thou canst, the harder reason guess,
Why form'd no weaker, blinder, and no less.
Ask of thy mother Earth, why oaks are made
Taller or stronger than the weeds they shade;
Or ask of yonder argent fields above,
Why Jove's Satellites are less than Jove.

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"If plagues and earthquakes break not Heav'n's design,
Why then a Borgia or a Catiline?
Who knows, but he whose hand the lightning forms,
Who heaves old ocean, and who wings the storms,
Pours fierce ambition in a Cæsar's mind,
Or turns young Ammon loose *to scourge mankind?*"
Warburton.

Ver. 31. *has thy pervading soul*] The reader will perhaps remember some of the sublime apostrophes in Job:

"Hast thou entered into the springs of the sea? and hast thou walked in the search of the depth? Have the gates of death been opened unto thee, or hast thou seen the doors of the shadow of death? Hast thou perceived the breadth of the earth? Declare, if thou *knowest it all!* *Bowles.*

Ver. 35 to 42.] In these lines the Poet has joined the beauty of argumentation to the sublimity of thought; where the similar instances, proposed for his adversaries' examination, shew as well the *absurdity* of their complaints against Order, as the *fruitlessness* of their inquiries into the arcana of the Godhead. *Warburton.*

Ver. 41. *Or ask of yonder, &c.*] On these lines M. Voltaire thus descants: "Pope dit que l'homme ne peut savoir pourquoi les

Of systems possible, if 'tis confess'd
That Wisdom infinite must form the best,

COMMENTARY.

Ver. 43. *Of systems possible, &c.*] So far the Poet's modest and sober Introduction; in which he truly observes, that no wisdom less than omniscient

" Can tell why Heav'n has made us as we are."

Yet, though we be unable to discover the *particular* reasons for this mode of our existence, we may be assured in *general* that it is *right*. For now, entering upon his argument, he lays down this evident proposition as the foundation of his Thesis, which he reasonably supposes will be allowed him, *That, of all possible systems, infinite*

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les Lunes de Jupiter sont moins grandes que Jupiter. Il se trompe en cela; c'est une erreur pardonable. Il n'y a point de Mathématicien qui n'eût fait voir," &c. [Vol. ii. p. 384. Ed. Gen.] And so goes on to shew, like a great mathematician as he is, that it would be very inconvenient for the Page to be as big as his Lord and Master. It is pity all this fine reasoning should proceed on a ridiculous blunder. The Poet thus reproves the impious complainer of the order of Providence: You are dissatisfied with the weakness of your condition. But, in your situation, the nature of things requires just such a creature as you are: in a different situation, it might have required that you should be still weaker. And though you see not the reason of this in your own case, yet, that reasons there are, you may see in the case of other of God's creatures:

" Ask of thy mother Earth, why oaks are made
Taller or stronger than the weeds they shade;
Or ask of yonder argent fields above,
Why Jove's Satellites are less than Jove."

Here (says the Poet) the ridicule of the *weeds'* and the *Satellites'* complaint, had they the faculties of speech and reasoning, would be obvious to all; because their very situation and office might have convinced them of their folly. Your folly, says the Poet to his complainers, is as great, though not so evident, because the reason is more out of sight; but that a reason there is, may be

 demonstrated

Where all must full or not coherent be,
And all that rises, rise in due degree;
Then, in the scale of reas'ning life, 'tis plain,
There must be, somewhere, such a rank as Man:
And all the question (wrangle e'er so long)
Is only this, if God has plac'd him wrong.
Respecting Man, whatever wrong we call,
May, must be right, as relative to all.

COMMENTARY.

infinite wisdom hath formed the best. Ver. 43, 44. From whence he draws two consequences:

1. The *first* (from ver. 44 to 51.) is, that as the best system cannot but be such a one as hath no unconnected void; such a one in which there is a perfect coherence and gradual subordination in all its parts; there must needs be, in some part or other of the scale of reasoning life, such a creature as MAN: which reduces the dispute to this absurd question, *Whether God has placed him wrong?*

Ver. 51. *Respecting Man, &c.*] It being shewn that MAN, *the subject* of this inquiry, has a necessary place in such a system as this is confessed to be; and it being evident, that the abuse of Free-will, from whence proceeds all moral evil, is the certain effect of such a creature's existence; the next question will be, How these evils can be accounted for, consistently with the idea we have of God's moral attributes? Therefore,

2. The *second* consequence he draws from his principle, *That of all possible systems, infinite Wisdom has formed the best,* is, that whatever is wrong in our private system, is right as relative to the whole:

"Respecting Man, whatever wrong we call,
May, must be right, as relative to ALL."

That

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demonstrated from the attributes of the Deity. This is the Poet's clear and strong reasoning; from whence, we see, he was so far from saying, that Man could not know the cause *why Jove's Satellites were less than Jove,* that all the force of his reasoning turns upon this, that Man did see and know it, and should from thence conclude, that there was a cause of this inferiority as well in the *rational,* as in the *material* creation. *Warburton.*

In human works, tho' labour'd on with pain,
A thousand movements scarce one purpose gain;
In God's, one single can its end produce;
Yet serves to second too some other use.
So man, who here seems principal alone,
Perhaps acts second to some sphere unknown,
Touches some wheel, or verges to some goal;
'Tis but a part we see, and not a whole.

COMMENTARY.

That it *may*, he proves (from ver. 52 to 61.) by shewing in what consists the difference between the *systematic* works of God, and those of Man; viz. that, in the latter, a thousand movements scarce gain one purpose; in the former, one movement gains many purposes. So that

" —— Man, who here seems *principal* alone,
Perhaps acts *second* to some sphere unknown."

And acting thus, the appearance of *wrong* in the *partial* system may be *right* in the *universal*; for

" 'Tis but a part we see, and not a whole."

That it *must*, the whole body of this epistle is employed to illustrate and enforce. Thus *partial Evil is universal Good*, and thus Providence is fairly acquitted.

NOTES.

Ver. 53. *In human works,*] Verbatim from Bolingbroke; Fragments 43 and 63. *Warton.*

" In the works of men," says Bolingbroke, " the most complicated schemes produce, very hardly and very uncertainly, one single effect. In the works of God, one single scheme produces a multitude of different effects, and answers an immense variety of purposes." This occurs towards the close of Bolingbroke's work, Fragm. 63; and was probably not written till after the publication of the Essay on Man.

Ver. 60. *'Tis but a part*] A new method of accounting for the origin of evil has been advanced by Hume in his Dialogues, p. 196. " I scruple not to allow," said Cleanthes, " that I have been apt to suspect the frequent repetition of the word infinite, which we meet with in all theological writers, to savour more of panegyric than of

When the proud steed shall know why Man restrains
His fiery course, or drives him o'er the plains;

COMMENTARY.

Ver. 61. *When the proud steed, &c.*] From all this the Poet draws a general conclusion (from ver. 60 to 91.), that, as what has been

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of philosophy; and that any purposes of reasoning, and even of religion, would be better served, were we to rest content with more accurate and more moderate expressions. The terms, admirable, excellent, superlatively great, wise, and holy, these sufficiently fill the imaginations of men; and any thing beyond, besides that it leads into absurdities, has no influence on the affections or sentiments. Thus, in the present subject, if we abandon all human analogy, as it seems your intention, Demea, I am afraid we abandon all religion, and retain no conception of the great object of our adoration. If we preserve human analogy, we must for ever find it impossible to reconcile any mixture of evil in the universe with infinite attributes; much less can we ever prove the latter from the former. But supposing the Author of Nature to be finitely perfect, though far exceeding mankind, a satisfactory account may then be given of natural and moral evil, and every untoward phenomenon be explained and adjusted. A less evil may then be chosen, in order to avoid a greater: inconveniencies be submitted to, in order to reach a desirable end: and, in a word, benevolence, regulated by wisdom and limited by necessity, may produce just such a world as the present." This seems to have been borrowed from Voltaire. Questions sur l'Encyclopédie, 9 Partie, p. 348. I have heard Dr. Adam Smith say, that these Dialogues concerning Natural Religion were the most laboured of all Hume's works. They were the occasion of Dr. Balguy's publishing that capital treatise, intitled, *Divine Benevolence:* which benevolence he undertakes to vindicate like this Essay on Man, but with greater consistency and closeness of reasoning, without having recourse to a future existence. Wollaston, in a celebrated passage, has given a striking and pathetic picture of the evils and miseries of this present life, in order to shew (as many divines do in their discourses) the absolute necessity of another, for the defence of the dispensations

When the dull ox, why now he breaks the clod,
Is now a victim, and now Egypt's God:
Then shall Man's pride and dulness comprehend
His actions', passions', being's, use and end;

COMMENTARY.

been said is sufficient to vindicate the ways of Providence, Man should rest submissive and content, and own every thing to be disposed for the best; that to think of discovering the *manner* how God conducts this wonderful scheme to its completion, is as absurd as to imagine that the horse and ox shall ever be able to comprehend why they undergo such different treatment in the hand of Man; nay, that such knowledge, if communicated, would be even *pernicious*, and make us *neglect* or *desert* our duty here. This he illustrates by the case of the lamb, which is happy in not knowing the fate that attends it from the butcher; and from thence takes occasion to observe, that God is the equal master of all his creatures, and provides for the proper happiness of each and every of them.

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dispensations of Providence. Dr. Balguy, from p. 110 to p. 127, has minutely, and step by step, confuted every part of this statement of the evils and miseries of life; and ends by saying, "that Wollaston has only attended to one side of the question. He has dwelt largely on the melancholy parts of human life; but, in great measure, overlooked its enjoyments. A pen like his could, with equal ease and success, have painted the happiness of our present state, and given it the appearance of a paradise." This is the passage of Wollaston, which Bolingbroke has so much ridiculed. Works, vol. ii. p. 110.

Ver. 64. *Egypt's God:*] Called so, because the God *Apis* was worshipped universally over the whole land of Egypt. *Warburton.*

VARIATIONS.

Ver. 64.] In the former Editions,

Now wears a garland, an Egyptian God:

altered as above for the reason given in the note.

After ver. 68. the following lines in the first Edition:

If to be perfect in a certain sphere,
What matters soon or late, or here or there?
The blest to-day is as completely so,
As who began ten thousand years ago. *Warburton.*

Why doing, suffering; check'd, impell'd; and why
This hour a slave, the next a deity.
Then say not Man's imperfect, Heav'n in fault;
Say rather, Man's as perfect as he ought:
His knowledge measur'd to his state and place;
His time a moment, and a point his space.
If to be perfect in a certain sphere,
What matter, soon or late, or here or there?
The blest to-day is as completely so,
As who began a thousand years ago.

III. Heav'n from all creatures hides the book of Fate,
All but the page prescrib'd, their present state;
From brutes what men, from men what spirits know,
Or who could suffer Being here below?
The lamb thy riot dooms to bleed to-day,
Had he thy reason, would he skip and play?
Pleas'd to the last, he crops the flow'ry food,
And licks the hand just rais'd to shed his blood.

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Ver. 70. *as he ought:*] Consequently man is not in a lapsed or degenerate state. He is as perfect a being as ever his Creator intended him to be; nor, consequently, did he stand in need of any redemption or atonement. The expression, as *he ought*, is imperfect; for, ought *to be*. *Warton.*

This extraordinary objection to a philosophical poem, has already been observed upon in the introductory note to the present edition.

Ver. 77. *the book of Fate,*] It would obviate the heavy difficulties in which we are involved, when we argue on the Divine Prescience, and consequent Predestination, if we were to adopt Archbishop King's opinion, and say, "that the knowledge of God is very different from the knowledge of Man, which implies succession, and seeing objects one after another; but the existence and the attributes of the Deity can have no relation to time; for that all things, past, present, and to come, are all at once present to the Divine Mind." *Warton.*

Oh! blindness to the future! kindly giv'n,
That each may fill the circle mark'd by Heav'n;
Who sees with equal eye, as God of all,
A hero perish, or a sparrow fall,
Atoms or systems into ruin hurl'd,
And now a bubble burst, and now a world.
Hope humbly then; with trembling pinions soar;
Wait the great teacher Death, and God adore.

COMMENTARY.

Ver. 91. *Hope humbly then; &c.*] But now an Objector is supposed to put in, and say, "You tell us, indeed, that all things shall terminate in good; but we see ourselves surrounded with present evil; yet you forbid us all inquiry into the manner how we are to be extricated from it, and, in a word, leave us in a very disconsolate condition." Not so, replies the Poet; you may reasonably, if you please, receive much comfort from the HOPE of a happy futurity; a *hope* implanted in the human breast by God himself for this very purpose, as an earnest of that bliss, which, always flying from us here, is reserved for the good man hereafter. The reason why the Poet chooses to insist on this proof of a future state, in preference to others, is in order to give his system (which is founded in a sublime and improved *Platonism*) the greater grace of uniformity. For HOPE was *Plato*'s peculiar argument for a future state; and the words here employed—*The soul uneasy, &c.* his peculiar expression. The Poet in this place, therefore, says in express terms, that GOD GAVE US HOPE TO SUPPLY THAT FUTURE BLISS, WHICH HE AT PRESENT KEEPS HID FROM US. In his second epistle, ver. 274, he goes still further, and says, this HOPE quits us not even at Death, when every thing mortal drops from us:

"Hope travels through, nor quits us when we die."

And,

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Ver. 87. *Who sees with equal eye, &c.*] Matth. x. 29. *Warburton.*

VARIATIONS.

After ver. 88, in the MS.

No great, no little; 'tis as much decreed,
That Virgil's Gnat should die, as Cæsar bleed. *Warburton.*

What future bliss, he gives not thee to know,
But gives that Hope to be thy blessing now.

COMMENTARY.

And, in the fourth epistle, he shews, how the same HOPE is a *proof* of a future state, from the consideration of God's giving his creatures no appetite in vain, or what he did not intend should be satisfied:

" He sees, why Nature plants in Man alone
Hope of known bliss, and Faith in bliss unknown:
(Nature, whose dictates to no other kind
Are giv'n in vain, but what they seek they find.)"

It is only for the *good man*, he tells us, that *Hope* leads from goal to goal, &c. It would then be strange indeed, if it should prove an illusion.

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Ver. 93. *What future bliss, &c.*] It hath been objected, that " the *System of the best* weakens the other natural arguments for a future state; because, if the evils which good men suffer, promote the benefit of the whole, then every thing is here in order: and nothing amiss that wants to be set right: nor has the good man any reason to expect amends, when the evils he suffered had such a tendency." To this it may be replied, 1. That the Poet tells us, (Ep. iv. ver. 361.) that *God loves from whole to parts.* Therefore, if, in the beginning and progress of the moral System, the good of the Whole be principally consulted, yet, on the completion of it, the good of Particulars will be equally provided for. 2. The *system of the best* is so far from weakening those natural arguments, that it strengthens and supports them. For if those evils, to which good men are subject, be mere disorders, without any tendency to the greater good of the whole; then, though we must, indeed, conclude that they will hereafter be set right, yet this view of things, representing God as suffering disorders for no other end than to set them right, gives us too low an idea of the divine wisdom. But if those evils (according to the *system of the best*) contribute

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Ver. 93, 94.] In the first Fol. and Quarto:
What bliss *above* he gives not thee to know,
But gives that Hope to be thy bliss *below.* *Warburton.*

Hope springs eternal in the human breast:
Man never Is, but always To be blest.
The soul, uneasy and confin'd, from home,
Rests and expatiates in a life to come.
Lo! the poor Indian, whose untutor'd mind
Sees God in clouds, or hears him in the wind;

COMMENTARY.

Ver. 99. *Lo, the poor Indian, &c.*] The Poet, as we said, having bid Man comfort himself with expectation of future happiness; having shewn him that this HOPE is an earnest of it; and put in one very necessary caution,

" Hope *humbly* then; with *trembling* pinions soar;"

provoked at those miscreants whom he afterwards (Ep. iii. ver. 263.) describes as building *Hell on spite, and Heaven on pride,* he upbraids them

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tribute to the greater perfection of the Whole, such a reason may be then given for their permission, as supports our idea of divine wisdom to the highest religious purposes. Then, as to the *good* man's hopes of a retribution, these still remain in their original force: for our idea of God's justice, and how far that justice is engaged to a retribution, is exactly and invariably the same on either hypothesis. For though the *system of the best* supposes that the *evils themselves* will be fully compensated by the good they produce to the *Whole,* yet this is so far from supposing that *Particulars* shall suffer for a *general good,* that it is essential to *this system,* that, at the completion of things, when the Whole is arrived to the state of utmost perfection, *particular* and *universal* good shall coincide.

" Such is the World's great harmony, that springs
From Order, Union, full consent of things:
Where *small* and *great,* where *weak* and *mighty,* made
To *serve,* not *suffer, strengthen,* not *invade,*" &c.

Epistle iii. ver. 295.

Which coincidence can never be, without a retribution to each good man for the evils he has suffered here below. *Warburton.*

Ver. 97. *from home,*] The construction is,—*The soul, uneasy and confined,* being *from home,* expatiates, *etc.* By which words, it was the Poet's purpose to teach, that the present life is only a state

His soul, proud Science never taught to stray
Far as the solar walk, or milky way;
Yet simple Nature to his hope has giv'n,
Behind the cloud-topp'd hill, a humbler heav'n;
Some safer world in depth of woods embrac'd,
Some happier island in the wat'ry waste,
Where slaves once more their native land behold,
No fiends torment, no Christians thirst for gold.
To Be, contents his natural desire,
He asks no angel's wing, no seraph's fire;

COMMENTARY.

them (from ver. 98 to 113.) with the example of the poor Indian, to whom also Nature hath given this *common* HOPE of *Mankind:* but though his untutored mind had betrayed him into many childish fancies concerning the nature of that future state, yet he is so far from excluding any part of his own species (a vice which could proceed only from the *pride* of false Science), that he humanely, though simply, admits even his *faithful dog to bear him company.*

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state of probation for another, more suitable to the essence of the soul, and to the free exercise of its qualities. *Warburton.*

In the first editions it stood,

The soul uneasy and confined at home,
Rests and expatiates in a life to come:

which is said to have been altered at the recommendation of Warburton, in order to prevent cavils; an effect which, however, it has failed to produce, as already remarked in the introductory note to the present edition.

Ver. 110. *He asks no angel's wing, no seraph's fire;*] The French

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After ver. 108. in the first Ed.

But does he say the Maker is not good,
Till he's exalted to what state he would:
Himself alone high Heav'n's peculiar care,
Alone made happy when he will, and where? *Warburton.*

But thinks, admitted to that equal sky,
His faithful dog shall bear him company.

IV. Go, wiser thou! and, in thy scale of sense,
Weigh thy opinion against Providence;

COMMENTARY.

Ver. 113. *Go, wiser thou! &c.*] He proceeds with these accusers of Providence (from ver. 112 to 123.), and shews them, that complaints against the *established order of things* begin in the *highest absurdity*, from misapplied *reason* and *power*; and end in the *highest impiety*, in an attempt to degrade the God of heaven, and to assume his place:

" Alone made perfect here, immortal there:"

That is, be made God, *who only is perfect, and hath immortality:* to which sense the lines immediately following confine us:

" Snatch from his hand the balance and the rod,
Re-judge his justice, be the God of God."

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French translator, M. l' Abbé Du Resnel, has turned the line thus:

" Il ne désire point cette céleste flamme
Qui des purs Seraphins dévore, et nourrit l' ame."

i. e. *The savage does not desire that heavenly flame, which at the same time that it devours the souls of pure Seraphims, nourishes them.* On which Mr. de Crousaz (who, by the assistance of a translation abounding in these absurdities, writ a *Commentary on the Essay on Man*, in which we find nothing but greater absurdities,) remarks, " Mr. Pope, in exalting the fire of his poetry by an antithesis, throws occasionally his ridicule on those heavenly spirits. *The Indian*, says the Poet, *contents himself without any thing of that flame, which devours at the same time that it nourisheth.*" *Comm.* p. 77. But the Poet is clear of this imputation. Nothing can be more grave or sober than his English, on this occasion; nor, I dare say, to do the translator justice, did he aim to be ridiculous. It is the sober, solid theology of the Sorbonne. Indeed had such a writer as Mr. Pope used this school-jargon, we might have suspected he was not so serious as he should be.——The reader, as he goes along, will see more of this translator's peculiarities. And the conclusion of the Commentary on the fourth Epistle will shew why I have been so careful to preserve them. *Warburton.*

Call imperfection what thou fanciest such,
Say, Here he gives too little, there too much:
Destroy all creatures for thy sport or gust,
Yet cry, If Man's unhappy, God's unjust;
If Man alone engross not Heav'n's high care,
Alone made perfect here, immortal there:
Snatch from his hand the balance and the rod,
Re-judge his justice, be the GOD of GOD.
In pride, in reas'ning pride, our error lies;
All quit their sphere, and rush into the skies.

COMMENTARY.

Ver. 123. *In pride, in reas'ning pride, our error lies; &c.*] From these men, the Poet now turns to his friend; and (from ver. 122 to 131.) remarks, that the ground of all this extravagance is *Pride;* which, more or less, infects the whole reasoning tribe; shews the ill effects of it, in the case of the fallen angels; and observes, that *even* wishing to invert the laws of Order, is a lower species of their crime. He then brings an instance of one of the effects of Pride, which is the folly of thinking every thing made *solely* for the use of Man, without the least regard to any other of the creatures of God.

"Ask for what end the heav'nly bodies shine," *&c.*

The ridicule of imagining the *greater portions* of the material system to be solely for the use of Man, true philosophy has sufficiently exposed: and common sense, as the Poet observes, instructs us to conclude, that our fellow-creatures, placed by Providence as the joint inhabitants of this globe, are designed to be joint sharers with us of its blessings:

"Has God, thou fool! work'd solely for *thy good*,
Thy joy, *thy* pastime, *thy* attire, *thy* food?
Who for *thy* table feeds the wanton fawn,
For *him* as kindly spreads the flow'ry lawn."

Epistle iii. ver. 27.

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Ver. 120. *Alone made perfect here, &c.*] The obvious meaning is, "Be content with the present life; it is your pride only that makes

Pride still is aiming at the blest abodes;
Men would be angels, angels would be Gods.
Aspiring to be Gods, if angels fell,
Aspiring to be angels, men rebel;

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makes you think yourself ill-treated, and induces you to look for another and more perfect state. Bolingbroke is for ever repeating the same note, &c." *Warton.*

Whatever may be the use that Bolingbroke makes of this doctrine, it is not the object for which it is introduced by Pope; who has no where contended that the present state of being is *a perfect system of itself*, but on the contrary, that it is a portion of *a general system*, and that what appears *imperfection* to us, is necessary *to the perfection of the whole*, of which as yet *we see but a part*. This is so obviously the tenor of the Essay, that one cannot but be surprised at these continual misrepresentations of it.

Ver. 126. *Men would be angels,*] Verbatim from Bolingbroke, vol. v. p. 465; as are many other passages. *Warton.*

The passage referred to is as follows: "Will it not be permitted me to say, that these men seem to be in the kingdom of God, what the ring-leaders of faction are in a state? Men would be angels, and we see in MILTON that angels would be Gods."—A passage which occurs near the termination of Bolingbroke's Essays, and which, notwithstanding the reference to *Milton*, was most likely occasioned by the passage in *Pope*.

Ver. 127. *if angels fell,*] Milton, in book v. copies from the Rabbinical writers, from the fathers, and some of the schoolmen, the causes of the rebellion of Satan and his associates, but seems more particularly to have in view an obscure Latin poem written by Odoricus Valmarana, and printed at Vienna in 1627, intitled, "Dæmonomachiæ, sive de Bello Intelligentiarum super Divini Verbi Incarnatione;" in which the revolt of Satan, or Lucifer, is expressly ascribed to his envy at the exaltation of the Son of God. See Newton's Milton, vol. i. p. 407. But the commentators on Milton have not observed that there is still another poem which he seems to have copied, "L'Angeleida di Erasmo di Valvasone," printed at Venice, in quarto, in 1590, describing the battle of the angels against Lucifer, and which Gordon de Porcel, in his Library

And who but wishes to invert the laws
Of ORDER, sins against th' Eternal Cause.
V. Ask for what end the heav'nly bodies shine,
Earth for whose use? Pride answers, "'Tis for mine:
For me kind Nature wakes her genial pow'r,
Suckles each herb, and spreads out ev'ry flow'r;
Annual for me, the grape, the rose renew,
The juice nectareous, and the balmy dew;
For me, the mine a thousand treasures brings;
For me, health gushes from a thousand springs;
Seas roll to waft me, suns to light me rise;
My foot-stool earth, my canopy the skies."

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brary of Romances, tom. ii. p. 190, thought related to Angelica, the heroine of Boiardo and Ariosto. I beg leave to add, that Milton seems also to have attended to a poem of Tasso, not much noticed, on the Creation, "Le Sette Giornate del Mondo Creato," in 1607. *Warton.*

Ver. 128. *Aspiring to be angels,*] One of the most pernicious tenets of Hobbes, was the debasing and disparaging human nature, attempting, in the language of Cudworth, to "villanise mankind." We know it has fallen from its original beauty and perfection: but "Intellectual Pride," the subject of so continued an invective through this Essay, being confined to a few, cannot be so dangerous to general morality, as the contrary extreme. This observation, however, does not affect the general sense in which Pope employs the idea, that it is from *presumption* we pretend to judge of what we can see and know so little.

"Cœlum ipsum petimus stultitiâ." *Bowles.*

Ver. 131. *Ask for what end, &c.*] If there be any fault in these lines, it is not in the general sentiment, but in the ill choice of instances made use of in illustrating it. It is the highest absurdity to think that *earth is* man's *foot-stool*, his *canopy the skies*, and the *heavenly bodies* lighted up principally for his use; yet surely, it is very excusable to suppose fruits and minerals given for this end. *Warburton.*

But errs not Nature from this gracious end,
From burning suns when livid deaths descend,

COMMENTARY.

Ver. 141. *But errs not Nature from this gracious end,*] The author comes next to the confirmation of his Thesis, That *partial moral Evil is universal Good;* but introduceth it with an allowed instance in the natural world, to abate our wonder at the phenomenon of moral evil; which he forms into an argument on a concession of his adversaries. If we ask you, says he (from ver. 140 to 151.), whether Nature doth not err from the gracious purpose of its Creator, when plagues, earthquakes, and tempests unpeople whole regions at a time; you readily answer, No: for that God acts by general, and not by particular laws; and that the course of matter and motion must be necessarily subject to some irregularities, because nothing is created perfect. I then ask, why you should expect this perfection in man? If you own that the *great end of God* (notwithstanding all this deviation) be *general happiness*, then it is *Nature* and not God, that deviates; do you expect greater constancy in Man?

"Then Nature deviates; and can Man do less?"

That is, if Nature, or the inanimate system (on which God hath imposed his laws, which it obeys, as a machine obeys the hand of the workman) may in course of time deviate from its first direction, as the best philosophy shews it may; where is the wonder that Man, who was created a free agent, and hath it in his power every moment to transgress the eternal rule of Right, should sometimes go out of Order?

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Ver. 141. *But errs not Nature, &c.*] Dr. Warton has in his edition given, in a Note of some pages, an extract from some MSS. of James Harris, Esq. in which he attempts to account for the origin of evil, under the idea that "what we think is evil is sometimes only so in appearance—that on the whole there is more good than evil—that some evil is productive of good, &c." If this be intended to shew that there is no *absolute evil*, but that every thing has a tendency to the production of good *on the whole*, it may be very true; but if it be designed to demonstrate that there is no actual evil in this *state of being*, and that there is therefore no necessity

When earthquakes swallow, or when tempests sweep
Towns to one grave, whole nations to the deep?
" No ('tis replied), the first Almighty Cause
Acts not by partial, but by gen'ral laws;
Th' exceptions few; some change since all began:
And what created perfect?"—Why then Man?
If the great end be human Happiness,
Then Nature deviates; and can Man do less?
As much that end a constant course requires
Of show'rs and sun-shine, as of Man's desires;

COMMENTARY.

Ver. 151. *As much that end, &c.*] Having thus shewn how moral evil came into the world, namely, *by man's abuse of his own free-will*, our Poet comes to the point, the *confirmation* of his thesis, by shewing how *moral* evil promotes good; and employs the *same* concessions of his adversaries, concerning *natural* evil, to illustrate it. 1. He

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cessity for another, the argument is futile and groundless; nor is it the doctrine of Pope, who never loses sight of the idea that man enjoys only a portion of his existence *here*, and that another state of being is requisite, in order to shew that every thing is right *upon the whole;* for which we must

" *Wait the great teacher Death.*"

Ver. 148. *And what created perfect?*"] No position can be more true and solid; for perfect happiness is as incommunicable as omnipotence. *Warton.*

Ver. 150. *Then Nature deviates; &c.*] " While comets move in very eccentric orbs, in all manner of positions, blind Fate could never make all the planets move one and the same way in orbs concentric; some inconsiderable irregularities excepted, which may have risen from the mutual actions of comets and planets upon one another, and which will be apt to increase, till this system wants a reformation." *Sir Isaac Newton's Optics, Quæst. ult.*

Warburton.

As much eternal springs and cloudless skies,
As Men for ever temperate, calm, and wise.
If plagues or earthquakes break not Heav'n's design,
Why then a Borgia, or a Catiline?

COMMENTARY.

1. He shews it tends to the *good* of the *Whole*, or *Universe* (from ver. 150 to 165.), and this by analogy. You own, says he, that storms and tempests, clouds, rain, heat, and variety of seasons, are necessary (notwithstanding the accidental evil they bring with them) to the health and plenty of *this Globe;* why then should you suppose there is not the same use, with regard to the *Universe,* in a Borgia or a Catiline? But you say you can see the one, and not the other. You say right: one terminates in this *system*, the other refers to the *Whole:* which *Whole* can be comprehended by none but the great Author himself. For, says the Poet in another place,

" —— of this frame, the bearings and the ties,
The strong connexions, nice dependencies,
Gradations just, has thy pervading soul
Look'd through? or can a *part* contain the *whole?*"
Ver. 29, *& seq.*

Own therefore, says he, that

" —— From pride, our very reas'ning springs;
Account for *moral*, as for *nat'ral* things:
Why charge we Heav'n in those, in these acquit?
In both, to *reason right*, is *to submit.*"

NOTES.

Ver. 155. *If plagues, &c.*] What hath misled Mr. de Crousaz in his censure of this passage, is his supposing the comparison to be between the effects of *two things in this sublunary world;* when not only the elegancy, but the justness of it, consists in its being between the effects of a thing in the *universe at large*, and the familiar, known effects of one *in this sublunary world.* For the position enforced in these lines is this, *that partial evil tends to the good of the whole.*

" Respecting

Who knows but He, whose hand the lightning forms,
Who heaves old ocean, and who wings the storms,
Pours fierce ambition in a Cæsar's mind,
Or turns young Ammon loose to scourge mankind?
From pride, from pride, our very reas'ning springs;
Account for moral, as for nat'ral things:
Why charge we Heav'n in those, in these acquit?
In both, to reason right, is to submit.
Better for us, perhaps, it might appear, 165
Were there all harmony, all virtue here;

COMMENTARY.

Ver. 165. *Better for us, &c.*] But, secondly, to strengthen the foregoing *analogical* argument, and to make the wisdom and goodness

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" Respecting Man, whatever wrong we call,
May, must be right, as relative to all." Ver. 51.

How does the Poet enforce it? If you will believe this critic, in illustrating the effects of partial moral evil in a particular system, by that of partial natural evil in the *same* system, and so he leaves his *position* in the lurch. But the Poet reasons at another rate. The way to prove his point, he knew, was to illustrate the effect of partial moral evil in the *universe*, by partial natural evil in a *particular system*. Whether partial moral evil tend to the good of the Universe, being a question which, by reason of our ignorance of *many* parts of that Universe, we cannot decide but from known effects, the rules of good reasoning require that it be proved by *analogy, i. e.* setting it by, and comparing it with, a thing *clear and certain;* and it is a thing *clear and certain*, that partial natural evil tends to the good of our *particular system*. *Warburton.*

Ver. 157. *Who knows but He, &c.*] The sublimity with which the great Author of Nature is here characterised, is but the second beauty of this fine passage. The greatest is the making the very dispensation objected to, the periphrasis of his title.

Warburton.

That never air or ocean felt the wind;
That never passion discompos'd the mind.

COMMENTARY.

ness of God still more apparent, he observes (from ver. 164 to 173), that *moral evil* is not only productive of *good* to the *Whole*, but is even productive of *good in our own system*. It might, says he, perhaps appear better to us, that there were nothing in this world but *peace* and *virtue:*

" That never air or ocean felt the wind;
That never passion discompos'd the mind."

But then consider, that as our *material system* is supported by the strife of its elementary particles, so is our *intellectual system*, by the conflict of our Passions, which are the elements of human action.

In a word, as without the benefit of tempestuous winds, both air and ocean would stagnate, corrupt, and spread universal contagion throughout all the ranks of animals that inhabit, or are supported by, them; so, without the benefit of the passions, such Virtue as was merely the effect of the absence of those Passions, would be a lifeless calm, a stoical apathy.

" Contracted all, retiring to the breast:
But health of mind is *exercise*, not *rest*."

Epistle ii. ver. 103.

Therefore, instead of regarding the conflicts of the elements, and the passions of the mind, as disorders, you ought to consider them as part of the *general order* of Providence: and that they are so, appears from their always preserving the same unvaried course, throughout all ages, from the creation to the present time:

" The *gen'ral Order*, since the Whole began,
Is kept in *Nature*, and is kept in *Man*."

We see, therefore, it would be doing great injustice to our author to suspect that he intended by this to give any encouragement to vice. His system, as all his Ethic Epistles shew, is this: That the *Passions*, for the reasons given above, are necessary to the support of Virtue: That, indeed, the Passions in excess produce Vice, which is, in its own nature, the greatest of all evils, and comes into the world from the abuse of man's free-will; but that God, in his infinite wisdom and goodness, deviously turns the natural

But ALL subsists by elemental strife;
And Passions are the elements of Life. 170
The general ORDER, since the whole began,
Is kept in Nature, and is kept in Man.

COMMENTARY.

tural bias of its malignity to the advancement of human happiness, and makes it productive of general Good:

"TH' ETERNAL ART EDUCES GOOD FROM ILL."

Epistle ii. ver. 175.

This, set against what we have observed of the Poet's doctrine of a *future state*, will furnish us with an instance of his *steering* (as he well expresses it in his preface) *between doctrines seemingly opposite: if his Essay has any merit, he thinks it is in this.* And doubtless it is uncommon merit to reject the visions and absurdities of every system, and take in only what is rational and real.

The CHARACTERISTICS and the FABLE OF THE BEES are two seemingly inconsistent systems; the folly of the first is in giving a scheme of *Virtue without Religion;* and the knavery of the latter, in giving a scheme of *Religion without Virtue.* These our Poet leaves to any that will take them up; but agrees, however, so far with the first, that "Virtue would be worth having, though itself was its only reward;" and so far with the latter, that "God makes Evil, against its nature, productive of Good."

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Ver. 169. *But* ALL *subsists, &c.*] See this subject extended in Epistle ii. from ver. 90 to 112, 155, &c. *Warburton.*

Ver. 171. *The general* ORDER,] It seems utterly impossible to explain these two remarkable lines in a way at all reconcileable to the doctrine of a lapsed condition of man, which opinion is the chief foundation of the Christian revelation, and the capital argument for the necessity of redemption.

"That system of philosophy," says an able writer, "which professes to justify the ways of God to man, without having recourse to the doctrine of a future state, must ever be considered as in the highest degree inimical to religion, whose very nature and essence it is to direct our views beyond the narrow limits of the present state

VI. What would this Man? Now upward will he soar,
And little less than angels, would be more;

COMMENTARY.

Ver. 173. *What would this Man? &c.*] Having thus justified Providence in its *permission* of partial MORAL EVIL, our author employs the remaining part of his Epistle in vindicating it from the imputation of certain supposed NATURAL EVILS. For now he shews (from ver. 172 to 207), that though the complaint of his adversaries against Providence be on pretence of *real moral evils;* yet, at bottom, it all proceeds from their impatience under *imaginary natural ones,* the issue of a depraved appetite for visionary advantages, which if Man had, they would be either *useless* or *pernicious*

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state of existence." See Essays Philosophical, Historical, and Literary, p. 399, for some very acute observations on the Essay on Man.

Pope in these lines uses almost the very words of Bolingbroke: "To think worthily of God, we must think that the natural order of things has always been the same; and that a Being of infinite wisdom and knowledge, to whom the past and the future are like the present, and who wants no experience to inform him, can have no reason to alter what infinite wisdom and knowledge have once done." Section 58. Essays to Pope. *Warton.*

It has already been sufficiently shewn, that Pope never intended to set up the *general order* of things as an argument against the doctrine of a future state; and it probably never occurred to him, that in a philosophical essay he would be expected to enter upon the consideration of the *lapsed condition of man;* a doctrine which he accordingly leaves where he found it. Pope is so far from using *the very words* of Bolingbroke, that the resemblance between the two passages is very slight indeed. Pope only means to assert, that notwithstanding particular deviations, the general order of things is preserved; whilst the language of Bolingbroke approaches to the doctrine of an unchangeable fatality.

Ver. 174. *And little less than angels, &c.*] *Thou hast made him a little lower than the angels, and hast crowned him with glory and honour.* Psalm viii. 9. *Warburton.*

Now looking downwards, just as griev'd appears,
To want the strength of bulls, the fur of bears.
Made for his use all creatures if he call,
Say, what their use, had he the pow'rs of all?
Nature to these, without profusion, kind,
The proper organs, proper pow'rs assign'd;
Each seeming want compensated of course,
Here with degrees of swiftness, there of force;
All in exact proportion to the state;
Nothing to add, and nothing to abate.

COMMENTARY.

nicious to him, as repugnant to his state, or unsuitable to his condition. Though God (says he) hath so bountifully bestowed on Man faculties little less than *angelic*, yet he ungratefully grasps at higher; and then, extravagant in another extreme, with a passion as ridiculous as that is impious, envies, as what would be advantages to himself, even the peculiar accommodations of *brutes*. But here his own false principles expose the folly of his falser appetites. He supposes them all made for his use: now what use could he have of them, when he had robbed them of all their qualities? Qualities distributed with the highest wisdom, as they are divided at present; but which, if bestowed according to the froward humour of these childish complainers, would be every where found to be either *wanting* or *superfluous*. But even though endowed with these brutal qualities, Man would not only be no gainer, but a considerable loser; as the Poet shews, in explaining the consequences which would follow from his having his sensations in that exquisite degree, in which this or the other animal is observed to possess them.

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Ver. 182. *Here with degrees of swiftness, &c.*] It is a certain axiom in the anatomy of creatures, that in proportion as they are formed for strength, their swiftness is lessened; or as they are formed for swiftness, their strength is abated. *Pope.*

Ver. 183. *All in exact proportion*] I cannot forbear thinking that a little French treatise on Providence, published at Paris, 1728, formed

Each beast, each insect, happy in its own:
Is Heav'n unkind to Man, and Man alone?
Shall he alone, whom rational we call,
Be pleas'd with nothing, if not bless'd with all?
The bliss of Man (could pride that blessing find)
Is not to act or think beyond mankind;
No pow'rs of body or of soul to share,
But what his nature and his state can bear.
Why has not Man a microscopic eye?
For this plain reason, Man is not a fly.
Say what the use, were finer optics giv'n,
T' inspect a mite, not comprehend the heav'n?
Or touch, if tremblingly alive all o'er,
To smart and agonize at ev'ry pore?
Or quick effluvia darting through the brain,
Die of a rose in aromatic pain?
If Nature thunder'd in his op'ning ears,
And stunn'd him with the music of the spheres,

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formed on the principles of Leibnitz, somewhat moderated, had fallen into the hands both of Bolingbroke and Pope, from the great similarity of the reasoning there employed. *Warton.*

Ver. 186. *Is Heav'n unkind to Man,*] Cudworth, Leibnitz, King, Shaftesbury, Hutcheson, Balguy, have all strenuously argued for the prepollency of good to evil in our present system; but none more forcibly than Balguy, from p. 103 to p. 125 of his Divine Benevolence. *Warton.*

Ver. 193. *Why has not man a microscopic eye? &c.*] That particular expression, *microscopic eye*, and the whole reasoning of this astonishing piece of poetry, is taken from Locke's Essay on the Human Understanding, Book ii. chap. 3. sec. 12. *Wakefield.*

Ver. 202. *And stunn'd him*] The argument certainly required an instance drawn from real sound, and not from the imaginary music of

How would he wish that Heav'n had left him still
The whisp'ring zephyr, and the purling rill!
Who finds not Providence all good and wise,
Alike in what it gives, and what denies?

VII. Far as Creation's ample range extends,
The scale of sensual, mental pow'rs ascends:

COMMENTARY.

Ver. 207. *Far as Creation's ample range extends,*] He tells us next (from ver. 206 to 233), that the complying with such extravagant desires would not only be useless and pernicious to Man, but would be breaking into the order, and deforming the beauty of God's Creation, in which *this* animal is subject to *that*, and every one to Man; who, by his Reason, enjoys the sum of all their powers.

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of the spheres. Locke's illustration of this doctrine is not only proper but poetical: "If our sense of hearing were but one thousand times quicker than it is, how would a perpetual noise distract us; and we should, in the quietest retirement, be less able to sleep or meditate, than in the middle of a sea-fight." In line before 193, the expression of microscopic eye is from Locke. *Warton.*

Ver. 202. *And stunn'd him, &c.*] This instance is poetical, and even sublime, but misplaced. He is arguing philosophically in a case that required him to employ the *real* objects of sense only: and, what is worse, he speaks of this as a *real* object—*If* NATURE *thunder'd*, &c. The case is different where (in ver. 253) he speaks of the motion of the heavenly bodies, under the sublime conception of *ruling angels:* for whether there be *ruling angels* or no, there is real *motion*, which was all his argument wanted; but if there be no *music of the spheres*, there was no real *sound*, which his argument was obliged to find. *Warburton.*

Ver. 207. *Far as Creation's ample range extends,*] It may be doubted, whether our author has excelled Dryden in the art of reasoning in rhyme, whose Religio Laici, and Hind and Panther, are in this respect admirable; though the fable of the latter abounds in absurdities and inconsistencies. *Warton.*

Mark how it mounts, to Man's imperial race,
From the green myriads in the peopled grass; 210
What modes of sight betwixt each wide extreme,
The mole's dim curtain, and the lynx's beam:

NOTES.

Ver. 209. *Mark how it mounts, to Man's imperial race,*] M. du Resnel has turned the latter part of the line thus,

" Jusqu'à l'Homme, ce chef, *ce Roi de l'Univers.*

" Even to man, this Head, this *King of the Universe,*" which is so sad a blunder, that it contradicts the Poet's peculiar system; who, although he allows *Man* to be King of this inferior world, yet he thinks it madness to make him *King of the Universe.* If the philosophy and argument of the Poem could not teach him this, yet methinks the Poet's own words, in this very Epistle, might have prevented his mistake:

" So man, who here seems *Principal* alone,
Perhaps acts *Second* to some sphere unknown."

If the translator imagined that Mr. Pope was speaking ironically where he talks of *Man's imperial race,* and so would heighten the ridicule of the original by *ce Roi de l'Univers,* the mistake is still worse; for the force of the argument depends upon its being said seriously; the Poet being here speaking of a scale from the highest to the lowest in the mundane system. *Warburton.*

Ver. 210. *From the green myriads*] These lines are admirable patterns of forcible diction. The peculiar and discriminating expressiveness of the epithets ought to be particularly regarded. Perhaps we have no image in the language more lively than that of the last verse. "To live along the line," is equally bold and beautiful. In this part of the epistle the Poet seems to have remarkably laboured his style, which abounds in various figures, and is much elevated. Pope has practised the great secret of Virgil's art, which was to discover the very single epithet that precisely suited each occasion. If Pope must yield to other poets in point of fertility of fancy, or harmony of numbers, yet in *point of propriety, closeness,* and *elegance of diction,* he can yield to none. Very inferior is the translation of Abbé du Resnel, of all this fine passage, to the original, though it is evident he took pains about it. See his four lines on the spider:

Contemplez

Of smell, the headlong lioness between,
And hound sagacious, on the tainted green:
Of hearing, from the life that fills the flood,
To that which warbles through the vernal wood.
The spider's touch, how exquisitely fine!
Feels at each thread, and lives along the line:
In the nice bee, what sense so subtly true,
From pois'nous herbs extracts the healing dew;
How Instinct varies in the grov'ling swine,
Compar'd, half-reas'ning elephant, with thine!
'Twixt that, and Reason, what a nice barrier,
For ever separate, yet for ever near!
Remembrance and Reflection, how allied;
What thin partitions Sense from Thought divide;

NOTES.

Contemplez l'araignée en son réduit obscur;
Que son toucher est vif, qu'il est prompt, qu'il est sur;
Sur ses pièges, tendus sans cesse vigilante,
Dans chacun de ses fils elle paroit vivante. *Warton.*

Ver. 213. *the headlong lioness*] The manner of the lions hunting their prey in the desarts of Africa is this. At their first going out in the night-time, they set up a loud roar, and then listen to the noise made by the beasts in their flight, pursuing them by the ear, and not by the nostril. It is probable the story of the jackall's hunting for the lion, was occasioned by the observation of this defect of scent in that terrible animal. *Pope.*

Ver. 224. *For ever separate, &c.*] *Near*, by the similitude of the operations; *separate*, by the immense difference in the nature of the powers. *Warburton.*

Ver. 226. *What thin partitions, &c.*] So *thin*, that the atheistic philosophers, as Protagoras, held that THOUGHT *was only* SENSE; and from thence concluded, that *every imagination or opinion of every man was true*: Πᾶσα φαντασία ἐστὶν ἀληθής. But the Poet determines more philosophically, that they are really and essentially

And Middle natures, how they long to join,
Yet never pass th' insuperable line!
Without this just gradation, could they be
Subjected, these to those, or all to thee? 230
The pow'rs of all subdued by thee alone,
Is not thy Reason all these pow'rs in one?

VIII. See, through this air, this ocean, and this earth,
All matter quick, and bursting into birth.

COMMENTARY.

Ver. 233. *See, through this air, &c.*] And further (from ver. 232 to 267.), that this breaking the order of things, which, as a link or chain, connects all beings, from the highest to the lowest, would unavoidably be attended with the destruction of the Universe; for that the several parts of it must at least compose as entire and harmonious a Whole, as the parts of a human body, can be doubted of by no one. Yet we see what confusion it would make

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essentially different, how *thin* soever the partition be by which they are *divided*. Thus (to illustrate the truth of this observation) when a geometer considers a triangle, in order to demonstrate the equality of its three angles to two right ones, he has the picture or image of some sensible triangle in his mind, which is *sense*; yet, notwithstanding, he must needs have the notion or idea of an intellectual triangle likewise, which is *thought*; for this plain reason, because every image or picture of a triangle must needs be obtusangular, or rectangular, or acutangular; but that which, in his mind, is the subject of his proposition, is the ratio of a triangle, *undetermined* to any of these species. On this account it was that Aristotle said, Νοηματα τινι διοίσει, τῷ μὴ φαντάσματα εἶναι, ἢ οὐδὲ ταῦτα φαντάσματα, ἀλλ' οὐκ ἄνευ φαντάσματων. *The conceptions of the mind differ somewhat from sensible images; they are not sensible images, and yet not quite free or disengaged from sensible images.* *Warburton.*

Above, how high, progressive life may go! 235
Around, how wide! how deep extend below!
Vast chain of Being! which from God began,
Natures ethereal, human, angel, man,

COMMENTARY.

make upon our frame, if the members were set upon invading each other's office:

"What if the foot," &c.

Who will not acknowledge, therefore, that a connexion in the disposition of things, so harmonious as here described, is transcendently beautiful? But the Fatalists suppose such an one. What then? Is the First Free Agent, the great Cause of all things, debarred a contrivance infinitely exquisite, because some Men, to set up their idol, Fate, absurdly represent it as presiding over such a system?

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Ver. 235. *Above, how high,*] This is a magnificent passage.

—— Has any seen
The mighty chain of beings, lessening down
From infinite Perfection, to the brink
Of dreary Nothing, desolate abyss!
From which astonish'd Thought recoiling turns?

THOMSON. *Warton.*

The passage in Locke on this topic is so eloquent, that the reader will pardon its insertion:

"That there should be more species of intelligent creatures above us, than there are of sensible and material below us, is probable to me from hence: That in all the visible corporeal world we see no chasms, or gaps. All quite down from us, the descent is by easy steps, and a continued series of things, that in each remove differ very little one from the other. And when we consider the infinite power and wisdom of the Maker, we have reason to think that it is suitable to the *magnificent harmony* of the Universe, and the great design and infinite goodness of the Architect, that the species of creatures should also, by gentle degrees, ascend upwards from us towards his infinite Perfection, as we see from us they gradually descend downward." Vol. ii. p. 4.

Bowles.

Beast, bird, fish, insect, what no eye can see,
No glass can reach; from infinite to thee,
From thee to nothing! On superior pow'rs
Were we to press, inferior might on ours:
Or in the full creation leave a void,
Where, one step broken, the great scale's destroy'd:
From Nature's chain whatever link you strike,
Tenth, or ten thousandth, breaks the chain alike.
And if each system in gradation roll,
Alike essential to th' amazing Whole,
The least confusion but in one, not all
That system only, but the Whole must fall.

NOTES.

Ver. 240. *No glass can reach;*] "There are," says Hooke, the naturalist, "8,280,000 *animalculæ* in one drop of water." "Nature, in many instances," says Themistius, "appears to make her transitions so imperceptibly, and by little and little, that in some beings it may be doubted whether they are animal or vegetable." *Warton.*

Ver. 244. *the great scale's destroy'd:*] All that can be said of the supposition of a scale of beings gradually descending from perfection to non-entity, and complete in every rank and degree, is to be found in the third chapter of King's Origin of Evil, and in a note of the Archbishop, marked G, p. 137, of Law's Translation, ending with these emphatical words: "Whatever system God had chosen, all creatures in it could not have been equally perfect; and there could have been but a certain determinate multitude of the most perfect; and, when that was completed, there would have been a station for creatures less perfect, and it would still have been an instance of goodness to give them a being as well as others." *Warton.*

Ver. 245. *From Nature's chain*] Almost the words of Marcus Antoninus, l. v. c. 8; as also v. 265. from the same. *Warton.*

VARIATIONS.

Ver. 238.] Ed. 1st.

Ethereal essence, spirit, substance, man. *Warburton.*

Let Earth unbalanc'd from her orbit fly,
Planets and stars run lawless through the sky;
Let ruling angels from their spheres be hurl'd,
Being on Being wreck'd, and world on world;

NOTES.

Ver. 251. *Let Earth unbalanc'd*] *i. e.* Being no longer kept within its orbit by the different directions of its progressive and attractive motions; which, like equal weights in a balance, keep it in an equilibre. *Warburton.*

It is observable, that these noble lines were added after the first folio edition. It is a pleasing and useful amusement to trace out the alterations that a great and correct writer gradually makes in his works. At first it ran,

How instinct varies! What a hog may want,
Compar'd with thine, half-reasoning Elephant.

And again;

What the advantage if his finer eyes
Study a mite, not comprehend the skies.

Which lines at present stand thus:

How instinct varies in the grov'ling swine,
Compar'd, half-reas'ning Elephant, with thine!
Say what the use, were finer optics giv'n,
T' inspect a mite, not comprehend the Heav'n.

Formerly it stood thus:

No self-confounding faculties to share,
No senses stronger than his brain can bear.

At present;

No pow'rs of body or of soul to share,
But what his nature and his state can bear.

It appeared at first very exceptionably;

Expatiate far o'er all this scene of Man,
A mighty maze! of walks without a plan.

Which contradicted his whole system, and it was altered to,

A mighty maze! but not without a plan! *Warton.*

Ver. 253. *Let ruling angels, &c.*] The Poet, throughout this Work, has, with great art, used an advantage which his employing a *Platonic* principle for the foundation of his Essay, had afforded

Heav'n's whole foundations to their centre nod,
And Nature tremble to the throne of God;
All this dread ORDER break—for whom? for thee?
Vile worm! oh Madness! Pride! Impiety!
IX. What if the foot, ordain'd the dust to tread,
Or hand to toil, aspir'd to be the head?
What if the head, the eye, or ear repin'd
To serve mere engines to the ruling mind?
Just as absurd for any part to claim
To be another, in this gen'ral frame:
Just as absurd, to mourn the tasks or pains,
The great directing MIND OF ALL ordains.
All are but parts of one stupendous whole,
Whose body Nature is, and God the soul;

COMMENTARY.

Ver. 267. *All are but parts of one stupendous whole,*] Our author having thus given a representation of God's work, as *one entire whole*, where all the parts have a necessary dependence on, and relation to each other, and where each particular part works and concurs to the perfection of the Whole, as such a system transcends vulgar ideas, to reconcile it to common conceptions he shews (from ver. 268 to 281.), that God is equally and intimately present to every sort of *substance*, to every particle of *matter*, and in

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forded him; and that is, the expressing himself (as here) in Platonic language; which, luckily for his purpose, is highly poetical, at the same time that it adds a grace to the uniformity of his reasoning. *Warburton.*

Ver. 259. *What if the foot, &c.*] This fine illustration in defence of the *System of Nature*, is taken from St. *Paul*, who employed it to defend the *System of Grace.* *Warburton.*

Ver. 265. *Just as absurd, &c.*] See the prosecution and application of this in Ep. iv. *Pope.*

Ver. 266. *The great directing* MIND, *&c.*] "Veneramur autem et

That, chang'd through all, and yet in all the same;
Great in the earth, as in th' ethereal frame; 270

COMMENTARY.

in every instant of *being;* which eases the labouring imagination, and makes us expect no less, from such a *Presence*, than such a *Dispensation.*

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et colimus ob dominium. Deus enim sine dominio, providentiâ, et causis finalibus, nihil aliud est quam FATUM et NATURA." *Newtoni Princip. Schol. gener. sub finem.* *Warburton.*

Ver. 267. *All are but parts*] These are lines of a marvellous energy and closeness of expression. They are exactly like the old Orphic verses quoted in Aristotle, De Mundo. Edit. Lugd. folio, 1590, p. 378; and line 289 as minutely resembles the doctrine of the sublime hymn of Cleanthes the Stoic; not that I imagine Pope or Bolingbroke ever read that hymn, especially the latter, who was ignorant of Greek. *Warton.*

Ver. 268. *Whose body Nature is, &c.*] Mr. de Crousaz remarks, on this line, that "A Spinozist would express himself in this manner." I believe he would; for so the infamous Toland has done, in his Atheist's Liturgy, called PANTHEISTICON. But so would St. Paul likewise, who, writing on this subject, the omnipresence of God in his Providence, and in his Substance, says, in the words of a pantheistical Greek Poet, *In him we live, and move, and have our being; i. e.* we are parts of him, *his offspring:* And the reason is, because a religious theist and an impious pantheist both profess to believe the omnipresence of God. But would Spinoza, as Mr. Pope does, call God *the great directing Mind of all,* who hath intentionally created a perfect Universe? Or would a Spinozist have told us,

"The workman from the work distinct was known?"

a line that overturns all Spinozism from its very foundations.

But this sublime description of the Godhead contains not only the *divinity* of St. Paul; but, if that will not satisfy the men he writes against, the *philosophy* likewise of Sir Isaac Newton.

The Poet says,

"All are but parts of one stupendous whole,
Whose body Nature is, and God the soul;" *&c.*

The Philosopher:—"In ipso continentur et moventur universa, sed absque mutuâ passione. Deus nihil patitur ex corporum motibus;

Warms in the sun, refreshes in the breeze,
Glows in the stars, and blossoms in the trees,

NOTES.

bus; illa nullam sentiunt resistentiam ex omnipræsentiâ Dei.—Corpore omni et figurâ corporeâ destituitur.—Omnia regit et omnia cognoscit—Cum unaquæque Spatii particula sit semper, et unumquodque Durationis indivisibile momentum, ubique certe rerum omnium Fabricator ac Dominus non erit nunquam, nusquam."

Mr. Pope:

" Breathes in our soul, informs our mortal part,
As full, as perfect, in a hair as heart;
As full, as perfect, in vile Man that mourns,
As the rapt Seraph that adores and burns:
To him, no high, no low, no great, no small;
He fills, he bounds, connects, and equals all."

Sir Isaac Newton:—" Annon ex phænomenis constat esse entem incorporeum, viventem, intelligentem, omnipræsentem, qui in spatio infinito, tanquam sensorio suo, res ipsas intime cernat, penitusque perspiciat, totasque intra se præsens præsentes complectatur."

But now, admitting there were an ambiguity in these expressions, so great that a Spinozist might employ them to express his own particular principles; and such a thing might well be, because the Spinozists, in order to hide the impiety of their principle, are wont to express the omnipresence of God in terms that any religious Theist might employ; in this case, I say, how are we to judge of the Poet's meaning? Surely, by the whole tenor of his argument. Now, take the words in the sense of the Spinozists, and he is made, in the conclusion of his epistle, to overthrow all he had been advancing throughout the body of it: for Spinozism is the destruction of an Universe, where every thing tends, by a foreseen contrivance in all its parts, to the perfection of the Whole. But allow him to employ the passage in the sense of St. Paul, *That we and all creatures live, and move, and have our being in God;* and then it will be seen to be the most logical support of all that had preceded. For the Poet having, as we say, laboured through his Epistle to prove, that every thing in the Universe tends, by a foreseen contrivance, and a present direction of all its parts, to the perfection of the Whole; it might be objected, that such a disposition of things implying in God a painful, operose, and inconceivable extent

Lives through all life, extends through all extent,
Spreads undivided, operates unspent;
Breathes in our soul, informs our mortal part,
As full, as perfect, in a hair as heart;

NOTES.

of Providence, it could not be supposed that such care extended to *all*, but was confined to the more noble parts of the creation. This gross conception of the First Cause the Poet exposes, by shewing that God is equally and intimately present to every particle of Matter, to every sort of Substance, and in every instant of Being. *Warburton.*

Ver. 270. *Great in the earth,*] It is remarkable, that perhaps the most solid refutation of Spinoza is in the fifth volume of Bayle's Dictionary, p. 199. *Warton.*

Ver. 274. *operates unspent;*] To Lucretius, who, in these very bold and magnificent lines, has asked,

"Quis regere immensi summam; quis habere profundi
Indu manu validas potis est moderanter habenas?
Quis pariter cœlos omneis convertere? et omneis
Ignibus ætheriis terras suffire feraceis?
Omnibus inque locis esse omni tempore præstó?

To this question, I say, we may answer, "That Great Being who is so powerfully described by Pope in this passage."

See on this subject the fine and convincing Discourse of Socrates with Aristodemus, in the first book of Xenophon's Memorabilia. *Warton.*

Ver. 276. *in a hair as heart;*] How much superior to a conceit of Cowley, addressed to J. Evelyne, Esq.

"If we could open and intend our eye,
We all, like Moses, should espy,
E'en in a Bush, the radiant Deity!"

Very sublime is the idea of the Great First Cause in a Fragment of Empedocles:

—— Φρὴν ἱερὴ, καὶ ἄθεσφεσατος ἔπλετο μῦνον,
Φροντίσι κόσμον ἅπαντα καταίσσουσα θοῆσι.

Ammonius, p. 199.

M. du Resnel has translated all this passage of Pope unfairly and absurdly.

Our author strove hard to excel four fine lines of his master Dryden,

As full, as perfect, in vile Man that mourns,
As the rapt Seraph, that adores and burns:
To Him no high, no low, no great, no small;
He fills, He bounds, connects, and equals all. 280

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Dryden, and has succeeded in the attempt; they are in a speech of Raphael, in the "State of Innocence," amidst much trash:

"Where'er thou art, he is; th' eternal Mind
Acts thro' all places; is to none confin'd:
Fills ocean, earth, and air, and all above,
And thro' the universal mass does move." *Warton.*

Ver. 277. *As full, as perfect, &c.*] Which M. Du Resnel translates thus,

"Dans un homme ignoré sous une humble chaumière,
Que dans le Seraphin, rayonnant de lumière.

i. e. *As well in the ignorant man, who inhabits a humble cottage, as in the Seraph encompassed with rays of light.* The translator, in good earnest thought, that a *vile man that mourn'd* could be no other than some poor Country Cottager. Which has betrayed M. De Crousaz into this important remark.—"For all that, we sometimes find in persons of the lowest rank, a fund of probity and resignation which preserves them from contempt; their minds are, indeed, but narrow, yet fitted to their station," &c. *Comm. p.* 120. But Mr. Pope had no such childish idea in his head. He was here opposing the human species to the angelic; and so spoke of the first, when compared to the latter, as *vile and disconsolate.* The force and beauty of the reflection depend upon this sense; and, what is more, the propriety of it. *Warburton.*

Ver. 280. *He fills, He bounds,*] This is a noble passage. Akenside entered the lists on this subject with our author. It will be pleasant to compare two such writers:

—— "Thee, O Father, this extent
Of matter; Thee, the sluggish earth and tract
Of seas, the heavens and heavenly splendors, feel,
Pervading, quickening, moving. From the depth
Of thy great essence, forth didst thou conduct
Eternal Form; and there, where Chaos reign'd,
Gav'st her dominion to erect her seat,

X. Cease then, nor ORDER Imperfection name:
Our proper bliss depends on what we blame.

COMMENTARY.

Ver. 281. *Cease then, nor* ORDER *Imperfection name:*] And now the Poet, as he had promised, having *vindicated the ways of God to Man*, concludes (from ver. 280 to the end), that, from what had been said, it appears, that the very things we blame contribute to our happiness, either as unrelated particulars, or at least as parts of the universal system; that our state of ignorance was allotted to us out of compassion; that yet we have as much knowledge as is sufficient

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And sanctify the mansion. All her works
Well-pleas'd thou didst behold. The gloomy fires
Of storm or earthquake, and the purest light
Of Summer; soft Campania's new-born rose,
And the slow weed, which pines on Russian hills,
Comely alike to thy full vision, stand:
To thy surrounding vision, which unites
All essences and powers of the great world
In one sole order; fair alike they stand,
As features well consenting, and alike
Requir'd by Nature ere she could attain
Her just resemblance to the perfect shape
Of universal beauty, which with Thee
Dwelt from the first."——

Book i. 569. The Pleasures of Imagination.

I will here add, as the best commentary on the prevailing doctrines of this first Epistle, a very exalted passage from Plotinus, in which he has introduced a sublime prosopopœia of Nature, or the Universe, speaking of the design of Creation; and I will give it in the forcible and energetic translation of Cudworth, Book i. p. 881, without apology for any antiquated expressions that this truly great divine and philosopher has made use of:

"That

VARIATIONS.

After Verse 282 in the MS.

Reason, to think of God when she pretends,
Begins a Censor, an Adorer ends. *Warburton.*

Know thy own point. This kind, this due degree
Of blindness, weakness, Heav'n bestows on thee.

COMMENTARY.

sufficient to shew us, that we are, and always shall be, as blest as we can bear; for that NATURE is neither a *Stratonic* chain of blind causes and effects,

(All Nature *is but* Art, *unknown to thee*,)

nor yet the fortuitous result of *Epicurean* atoms,

(*All* Chance, Direction, *which thou canst not see*);

as those two species of atheism supposed it; but the wonderful art and contrivance, unknown indeed to Man, of an all-powerful, all-wise, all-good, and free Being. And therefore we may be assured, that the arguments brought above, to prove partial moral Evil productive

NOTES.

"That which God made was the Whole, as One thing; which he that attends to may hear it speaking to him after this manner: "God Almighty hath made Me, and from thence came I perfect and complete, and standing in need of nothing, because in Me are contained all things; plants and animals, and good souls, and men happy with virtue; and innumerable demons, and many gods. Nor is the earth alone in me adorned with all manner of plants and variety of animals; or does the power of soul extend at most no further than to the seas, as if the whole air, and æther, and heaven, in the mean time, were quite devoid of soul, and altogether unadorned with living inhabitants. Moreover, all things in me desire good, and every thing reaches to it, according to its power and nature. For the whole world depends upon that first and highest good, the gods themselves who reign in my several parts, and all animals and plants, and whatsoever seems to be inanimate in me. For some things in me partake only of being, some of life also, some of sense, some of reason, and some of intellect above reason. But no man ought to require equal things from unequal; nor that the finger should see, but the eye; it being enough for the finger to be a finger, and to perform its own office. As an artificer would not make all things in an animal to be eyes; so neither has the Divine Λόγος, or Spermatic Reason of the World, made all things gods; but some gods, and some demons, and some men, and some lower animals: not out of envy, but

Submit.—In this, or any other sphere, 285
Secure to be as blest as thou canst bear:

COMMENTARY.

productive of Good, are conclusive; from whence one certain truth results, in spite of all the pride and cavils of vain reason, That WHATEVER IS, IS RIGHT.

That the reader may see in one view the exactness of the method, as well as force of the argument, I shall here draw up a short synopsis of this Epistle. The Poet begins by telling us, his subject is an Essay on Man: That his end of writing is *to vindicate Providence:* That he intends to derive his arguments *from the visible things of God seen in this system:* Lays down this proposition, *That of all possible systems, infinite Wisdom has formed the best:* Draws from thence two consequences; 1. *That there must needs be somewhere such a creature as Man;* 2. *That the moral Evil, which he is author of, is productive of the Good of the Whole.* This is

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but to display its own variety and fecundity: but we are like unskilful spectators of a picture, who condemn the limner, because he hath not put bright colours every where; whereas he had suited his colours to every part respectively, giving to each such as belonged to it. Or else are we like those who would blame a comedy or tragedy, because they were not all kings or heroes that acted in it, but some servants and rustic clowns introduced also, talking after their rude fashion. Whereas the dramatic poem would neither be complete, nor elegant and delightful, were all those worser parts taken out of it."

The learned reader will be highly gratified by turning to a fine passage on this subject in Plutarch, De Animi Tranquillitate, vol. ii. p. 473, folio, 1620, and to the noble lines of Euripides there quoted; and would be gratified still more by attentively perusing the short treatise of Aristotle, Περὶ Κοσμοῦ, concerning the beauty and concord of the Universe arising from Contrarieties; which treatise, notwithstanding the different form of its composition, ought to be ascribed to this philosopher, for the reasons assigned by Petit in his Observations, B. ii.; and by a dissertation of Daniel Heinsius, as well as the opinion of our truly learned Bishop Berkeley. *Warton.*

Safe in the hand of one disposing Pow'r,
Or in the natal, or the mortal hour.

COMMENTARY.

is his general Thesis; from whence he forms this conclusion, *That Man should rest submissive and content, and make the hopes of Futurity his comfort; but not suffer this to be the occasion of* PRIDE, which is the cause of all his impious complaints.

He proceeds to confirm his Thesis—Previously endeavours to abate our wonder at the phenomenon of *moral Evil;* shews, first, *its use to the perfection of the Universe,* by analogy, from the use of *physical Evil* in this particular system:—Secondly, *its use in this system,* where it is turned, providentially, from its natural bias, to promote virtue. Then goes on to vindicate Providence from the imputation of certain *supposed natural Evils;* as he had before justified it for the permission of *real moral Evil,* in shewing that, though the atheist's complaint against Providence be on pretence of *real moral Evil,* yet the true cause is his impatience under *imaginary natural Evil;* the issue of *a depraved appetite for fantastical advantages,* which, if obtained, would be *useless* or *hurtful* to man, and deforming of, and destructive to, the Universe, as breaking into that order by which it is supported.——He describes that *order, harmony, and close connexion of the parts;* and by shewing the intimate presence of God to his whole creation, gives a reason for an Universe so amazingly beautiful and perfect. From all this he deduces his general conclusion, *That Nature being neither a blind chain of Causes and Effects, nor yet the fortuitous result of wandering atoms, but the wonderful art and direction of an all-wise, all-good, and free Being;* WHATEVER IS, IS RIGHT, *with regard to the disposition of God, and its ultimate tendency;* which once granted, all complaints against Providence are at an end.

NOTES.

Ver. 287. *Safe in the hand*] "Be there two worlds, or be there twenty, the same God is the God of all; and wherever we are, we are equally in his power. Far from fearing my Creator, that all-perfect Being whom I adore, I should fear to be no longer his creature." BOLINGBROKE.

Si sic omnia dixisset! *Warton.*

All Nature is but Art, unknown to thee;
All Chance, Direction, which thou canst not see;

NOTES.

Ver. 289. *All Nature is but Art,*] Cudworth observes, upon Lucretius's having said,

" Usque adeo res humanas vis abdita quædam
Obterit,"——

that here he reeled and staggered in his atheism; or was indeed a Theist, and knew it not.

" Nature is the art whereby God governs the world," says Hobbes. *Warton.*

Ver. 291. *All Discord, Harmony*] The words of Plato, in the Thæot. are, καὶ τοῦτο μεγίστης τέχνης ἀγαθὸν ποιεῖν τὰ κακά. " This must be acknowledged to be the greatest of all arts, to be able to bonifie evils, or tincture them with good."

CUDWORTH, p. 221. Intellectual System.

I was surprised to see this philosophical doctrine amply illustrated in one of our quaint old writers, Feltham, in his Resolves, p. 130. 1633.

" The whole world is kept in order by Discord; and every part of it is but a more particular composed jarre. Not a man, not a beast, not a creature, but have something to ballast their lightnesse. One scale is not alwaies in depression, nor the other lifted ever high, but the alternate wave of the beame keepes it ever in the play of motion. From the pismire on the tufted hill, to the monarch in the raised throne, nothing but hath somewhat to awe it. Wee are all here like birds that boyes let flye in strings: when we mount too high, wee have that which puls us downe againe. What man is it which lives so happily, which feares not something that would sadden his soule if it fell? Nor is there any whom calamity doth so much tristitiate, as that hee never sees the flashes of some warming joy. Beasts with beasts are terrified and delighted. Man with man is awed and defended. States with states are bounded and upholded. And, in all these, it makes greatly for the Maker's glory that such an admirable harmony should bee produced out of such an infinite discord. The world is both a perpetuall warre, and a wedding. Heraclitus called a Discord and Concord the universal Parents. And " to raile on Discord,"

All Discord, Harmony not understood; 291
All partial Evil, universal Good:
And, spite of Pride, in erring Reason's spite,
One truth is clear, WHATEVER IS, IS RIGHT.

NOTES.

Discord," saies the Father of the Poets, " is to speake ill of Nature. As in musicke sometimes one string is lowder, sometimes another; yet never one long, nor never all at once; so sometimes one state gets a monarchy, sometimes another: sometimes one element is violent, now another: yet never was the whole world under one long; nor were all the elements raging together. Every string has his use, and his tune, and his turne."

Feltham, we may imagine, did not know that this was a doctrine so old as Heraclitus, who speaks of Παλίντροπος ἁρμονία κόσμου, a versatile harmony of the world, whereby things reciprocate backwards and forwards, &c.; quoted by Cudworth, Chap. iv. B. i. from Plutarch, De Iside et Osiride, of two principles, a good God and an evil Dæmon; the Manichean doctrine. *Warton.*

Ver. 294. *One truth is clear,* WHATEVER IS, IS RIGHT.] It will be difficult to think any caviller should have objected to this conclusion; especially when the author, in this very epistle, has himself thus explained it:

" Respecting Man, whatever wrong we call,
May, must be right, as relative to ALL.——
So Man, who here seems *principal* alone,
Perhaps acts *second* to some sphere unknown;
Touches some wheel, or verges to some goal:
'Tis but a part we see, and not a whole."

But without any regard to the evidence of this illustration, M. de Crousaz exclaims: " See the general conclusion, *All that is, is right.* So that at the sight of Charles the First losing his head on the scaffold, we must have said, *this is right;* at the sight too of his judges condemning him, we must have said, *this is right;* at the sight of some of these judges, taken and condemned for the action which he had owned to be right, we must have cried out, *this is doubly right.*" Never was any thing more amazing than that the absurdities arising from the sense in which this critic takes the

the great principle, of *whatever is, is right*, did not shew him his mistake. For could any one in his senses employ a proposition in a meaning from whence such evident absurdities *immediately* arise? I have observed, that this conclusion, *whatever is, is right*, is a consequence of these premises, that *partial Evil tends to universal Good;* which the author employs as a principle to humble the pride of Man, who would impiously make God accountable for his creation. What then does common sense teach us to understand by *whatever is, is right?* Did the Poet mean right with regard to Man, or right with regard to God; right with regard to itself, or right with regard to its ultimate tendency? Surely, WITH REGARD TO GOD; for he tells us his design is to *vindicate the ways of God to Man.* Surely with regard to its ULTIMATE TENDENCY; for he tells us again, *all partial ill is universal good*, Ver. 291. Now is this any encouragement to Vice? Or does it take off from the crime of him who commits it, that God providentially produces Good out of Evil? Had Mr. Pope abruptly said in his conclusion, *the result of all is, that whatever is, is right*, the objector had even then been inexcusable for putting so absurd a sense upon the words, when he might have seen that it was a conclusion from the general principle abovementioned; and therefore must necessarily have another meaning. But what must we think of him, when the Poet, to prevent mistakes, had delivered, in this very place, the principle itself, together with this conclusion as the consequence of it?

> " All Discord, Harmony not understood;
> *All partial Evil, universal Good;*
> And, spite of Pride, in erring Reason's spite,
> One truth is clear,——*Whatever Is, is Right.*"

He could not have told his reader plainer that his conclusion was the consequence of that principle, unless he had written THEREFORE in great Church letters. *Warburton.*

* * * *

BAYLE was the person who, by stating the difficulties concerning the Origin of Evil, in his Dictionary, 1695, with much acuteness and ability, revived the Manichean controversy that had been long dormant. He was soon answered by Le Clerc in his Parrhasiana, and by many articles in his Bibliotheques. But by no writer was Bayle so powerfully attacked, as by the excellent Archbishop King, in his Treatise De Origine Mali, 1702. About 1705, Lord Shaftesbury frequently visited Bayle at Rotterdam, whose wit and learning he admired, and made him a present of an elegant watch by a delicate stratagem; and offered him a fine collection of books, which that philosopher declined to accept. He had many conversations and disputes with Bayle on the Manichean controversy; and in 1709 wrote the famous Dialogue, intitled, The Moralists, as a direct confutation of the opinions of Bayle; though he had before touched on this subject, 1699, when the first edition of the Enquiry concerning Virtue and Merit was published: as did his disciple Hutcheson, 1725. In 1710, Leibnitz wrote his famous Theodicée; without entering into the metaphysical refinements of that piece, it may be more amusing to our reader just to mention the agreeable fiction with which he ends his philosophical disquisition. He feigns (in continuance of a Dialogue of Laurentius Valla), that Sextus the son of Tarquin goes to Dodona to complain to Jupiter of the crime which he was destined to commit, the rape of Lucretia. Jupiter answers him, that he had nothing to do but to abstain from going to Rome: but Sextus declares positively, that he could not renounce the hope of being a king, and accordingly to Rome he goes. After his departure, the high priest, Theodorus, asks Jupiter, why he did not give another will to Sextus? Jupiter sends Theodorus to Athens to consult Minerva; she shews to Theodorus the great palace of the Destinies, in which were placed all the pictures and representations of all possible worlds, from the worst model to the best. Theodorus beholds, in the latter, the crime which Sextus was doomed to commit; from which crime arose the liberty of Rome, and a mighty empire; an event so interesting to a great part of the human race. Theodorus was silenced.

In 1720 Dr. John Clarke published his Enquiry into the Cause

and Origin of Evil, a work full of sound reasoning; but almost every argument on this most difficult of all subjects had been urged many years before any of the above-mentioned treatises appeared, namely 1678, by that truly great scholar and divine, Cudworth, in that inestimable treasury of learning and philosophy, his Intellectual System, to which so many authors have been indebted, without owning their obligations.

I thought this little account of the writers who had preceded Pope, on the subject of this Essay, not improper to be subjoined in this place. *Warton.*

ARGUMENT OF EPISTLE II.

Of the Nature and State of Man, with respect to Himself, *as an Individual.*

I. The business of Man not to pry into God, *but to study* himself. *His* Middle Nature; *his Powers and Frailties,* Ver. 1 *to* 19. *The Limits of his* Capacity, Ver. 19, &c. II. *The two Principles of Man,* Self-love, *and* Reason, *both necessary,* Ver. 53, &c. Self-love *the stronger, and why,* Ver. 67, &c. *Their end the same,* Ver. 81, &c. III. *The* Passions, *and their use,* Ver. 93 *to* 130. *The* Predominant Passion, *and its force,* Ver. 132 *to* 160. *Its Necessity, in directing Men to different purposes,* Ver. 165, &c. *Its providential use in fixing our Principle, and ascertaining our Virtue,* Ver. 177. IV. Virtue *and* Vice *joined in our* mixed Nature; *the limits near, yet the things* separate *and* evident: *What is the Office of* Reason, Ver. 202 *to* 216. V. *How odious* Vice *in itself, and how we deceive ourselves in it,* Ver. 217. VI. *That, however, the* Ends *of* Providence *and* general Good *are answered in our Passions and Imperfections,* Ver. 238, &c. *How usefully these are distributed to all* Orders of Men, Ver. 241. *How useful they are to* Society, Ver. 251. *And to* Individuals, Ver. 263. *In every* State, *and every* age *of life,* Ver. 273, &c.

EPISTLE II.

I. KNOW then thyself, presume not God to scan;
The proper study of Mankind is Man.
Plac'd on this isthmus of a middle state,
A Being darkly wise, and rudely great:

COMMENTARY.

Ver. 2. *The proper study, &c.*] The Poet having shewn, in the *first* epistle, that the *ways of God* are too high for our comprehension, rightly draws this conclusion; and methodically makes it the subject of his Introduction to the *second*, which treats of the *Nature of Man*.

But here presently the accusers of Providence would be apt to object, and say, "Admit that we ran into an excess, when we pretended to censure or penetrate the designs of Providence, a matter, perhaps, too high for us; yet have not you gone as far into the opposite extreme, while you only send us to the knowledge of OURSELVES? You must mock us when you talk of this as a study; for who can doubt but we are intimately acquainted with our own Nature? The proper conclusion, therefore, from your proof of our inability to comprehend the ways of God, is, that we should turn ourselves to the study of the frame of general NATURE." Thus, I say, would they be apt to object; for, of all Men,

NOTES.

Ver. 3. *Plac'd on this isthmus, &c.*] As the Poet hath given us this sublime description of Man for the very contrary purpose to what *Sceptics* are wont to employ such kind of paintings, namely, not to deter men from the search, but to excite them to the discovery of truth; he hath, with great judgment, represented Men as

VARIATIONS.

Ver. 2.] Ed. 1st.

The only science of Mankind is Man. *Warburton.*

With too much knowledge for the Sceptic side,
With too much weakness for the Stoic's pride,

COMMENTARY.

Men, those who call themselves *Freethinkers* are most given up to *Pride;* especially to that kind which consists in a boasted knowledge of Man, the effects of which pride are so well exposed in the *first* Epistle. The Poet, therefore, to convince them that this study is less easy than they imagine, replies (from ver. 2 to 19.) to the *first* part of the objection, by describing the dark and feeble state of the human understanding, with regard to the knowledge of ourselves. And further to strengthen this argument, he shews, in answer to the *second* part of the objection, (from ver. 18 to 31.), that the highest advances in *natural knowledge* may be easily acquired, and yet we, all the while, continue very ignorant of *ourselves.* For that neither the clearest science, which results from the Newtonian philosophy, nor the most sublime, which is taught by the Platonic, will at all assist us in this self-study; nay, what is more, that Religion itself, when grown fanatical and enthusiastic, will be equally useless; though pure and sober Religion will best instruct us in Man's Nature; that knowledge being necessary to Religion, whose subject is Man, considered in all its relations, and consequently, whose object is God.

NOTES.

as doubting and wavering between the *right* and *wrong* object; from which state it is allowable to hope he may be relieved by a careful and circumspect use of Reason. On the contrary, had he supposed Man so blind as to be busied in chusing, or doubtful in his choice, between two objects *equally wrong*, the case had appeared desperate, and all *study of Man* had been effectually discouraged. But M. Du Resnel, not seeing the reason and beauty of this conduct, hath run into the very absurdity, which I have here shewn Mr. Pope so artfully avoided. Of which the learned reader may take the following proofs. The Poet says,

" Man hangs between; in doubt to *act*, or *rest*."

Now he tells us it is Man's duty to *act*, not *rest*, as the Stoics thought; and, to this their principle, the latter word alludes, whose Virtue, as he says afterwards, is

——— " fix'd

He hangs between; in doubt to act, or rest;
In doubt to deem himself a God, or Beast;

NOTES.

——— " fix'd as in a frost,
Contracted all, retiring to the breast:
But strength of mind is EXERCISE not REST."

Now hear the translator, who is not for mincing matters:

" Seroit-il en naissant *au travail condamné?*
Aux *douceurs du répos* seroit-il destiné?"

and these are both wrong, for Man is neither condemned to *slavish Toil and Labour*, nor yet indulged in the *Luxury of Repose*. The Poet says,

" In doubt to deem himself a God, or Beast."

i. e. He doubts, as appears from the very next line, whether his soul be *mortal* or *immortal;* one of which is the truth, namely, its *immortality*, as the Poet himself teaches, when he speaks of the omnipresence of God:

" Breathes in our *Soul*, informs our *mortal* part."
Ep. i. ver. 275.

The translator, as we say, unconscious of the Poet's purpose, rambles as before:

" Tantôt de son esprit admirant l'excellence,
Il pense qu'il est Dieu, *qu'il en a la puissance;*
Et tantôt gémissant des besoins de son corps,
Il croit que de la brute, il n'a que les RESSORTS."

Here his head, turned to a sceptical view, was running on the different extravagances of Plato in his Theology, and of Des Cartes in his Physiology. Sometimes, says he, Man believes himself a *real God;* and sometimes again, a *mere machine:* things quite out of the Poet's thought in this place. Again, the Poet, in a beautiful allusion to Scripture sentiments, breaks out into this just and moral reflection on Man's condition here,

" Born but to die, and reas'ning but to err."

The translator turns this fine and sober thought into the most outrageous scepticism:

" Ce n'est que pour mourir, qu'il est né, qu'il respire;
Et *toute sa raison n'est presque qu'un delire.*"

and

In doubt his mind or body to prefer;
Born but to die, and reas'ning but to err; 10
Alike in ignorance, his reason such,
Whether he thinks too little or too much:
Chaos of thought and passion, all confus'd;
Still by himself abus'd, or disabus'd;

NOTES.

and so makes his author directly contradict himself, where he says of Man, that he hath

— "too much knowledge for the Sceptic side."

Warburton.

Ver. 10. *Born but to die, &c.*] The author's meaning is, that as we are *born to die*, and yet do enjoy some small portion of life; so, though we *reason to err*, yet we comprehend some few truths. This is the weak state of reason, in which error mixes itself with all its true conclusions concerning Man's nature. *Warburton.*

Ver. 11. *Alike in ignorance, &c.*] *i. e.* The proper sphere of his Reason is so narrow, and the exercise of it so nice, that the too immoderate use of it is attended with the same ignorance that proceeds from the not using it at all. Yet though, in both these cases he is *abused by himself*, he has it still in his own power to *disabuse himself*, in making his Passions subservient to the *means*, and regulating his Reason by the *end* of life. *Warburton.*

Ver. 12. *Whether he thinks too little or too much:*] It is so true, that ignorance arises as well from pushing our inquiries too far, as from not carrying them far enough, that we may observe, when speculations, even in Science, are carried beyond a certain point; that point, where use is reasonably supposed to end, and mere curiosity to begin; they conclude in the most extravagant and senseless inferences; such as the unreality of matter; the reality of space; the servility of the Will, &c. The cause of this sudden fall out of full light into utter darkness, seems not to arise from the natural condition of things, but to be the arbitrary decree of infinite wisdom and goodness, which imposed a barrier to the extravagances of its giddy, lawless creature, always inclined to pursue truths of less importance too far, and to neglect those which are more necessary for his improvement in his station here.

Warburton.

Created half to rise, and half to fall;
Great Lord of all things, yet a prey to all;
Sole judge of truth, in endless error hurl'd;
The glory, jest, and riddle of the world!
Go, wondrous creature! mount where Science guides,
Go, measure earth, weigh air, and state the tides;

NOTES.

Ver. 20. *Go, measure earth, &c.*] Alluding to the noble and useful labours of the modern mathematicians, in measuring a degree at the equator and the polar circle, in order to determine the true figure of the earth; of great importance to astronomy and navigation; and which proved of equal honour to the wonderful sagacity of Newton. *Warburton.*

VARIATIONS.

After ver. 18. in the MS.

For more perfection than this state can bear
In vain we sigh; Heav'n made us as we are.
As wisely sure a modest ape might aim
To be like Man, whose faculties and frame
He sees, he feels, as you or I to be
An angel thing we neither know nor see.
Observe how near he edges on our race;
What human tricks! how risible of face!
"It must be so—why else have I the sense
Of more than monkey charms and excellence?
Why else to walk on two so oft essay'd?
And why this ardent longing for a maid?"
So Pug might plead, and call his Gods unkind,
Till set on end, and married to his mind.
Go, reas'ning thing! assume the Doctor's chair,
As Plato deep, as Seneca severe:
Fix moral fitness, and to God give rule,
Then drop into thyself, &c.—— *Warburton.*

These lines were very judiciously and properly expunged by the author.

Instruct the planets in what orbs to run,
Correct old Time, and regulate the Sun;
Go, soar with Plato, to th' empyreal sphere,
To the first good, first perfect, and first fair;
Or tread the mazy round his followers trod,
And quitting sense call imitating God;
As Eastern priests in giddy circles run,
And turn their heads to imitate the Sun;
Go, teach Eternal Wisdom how to rule—
Then drop into thyself, and be a fool!

NOTES.

Ver. 22. *Correct old Time, &c.*] This alludes to Newton's Grecian Chronology, which he reformed on those two sublime conceptions, the difference between the reigns of kings, and the generations of men; and the position of the colures of the equinoxes and solstices at the time of the Argonautic expedition.

Warburton.

Ver. 26. *And quitting sense, &c.*] This alludes to that philosophical system, founded on the doctrines of Plato, which Ammonius Saccas taught, towards the conclusion of the second century, who laid the foundation of the sect which was distinguished by the name of the *New* Platonics. His object was to unite Platonism with Christianity. He taught his followers to abstract themselves from all worldly feelings, and, by a continual contemplation of the Divine Nature, to work themselves up to an imitation of the Supreme Being, to mortify the body, and to enjoy in spirit a holy and sublime communion with Heaven. See Mosheim, vol. i. p. 85. Maclaine's Trans.—Brucker's Historia Philo. vol. ii. iii.

Bowles.

Ver. 29, 30. *Go, teach Eternal Wisdom, &c.*] These two lines are a conclusion from all that had been said from ver. 18. to this effect: Go now, vain Man, elated with thy acquirements in *real* science,

VARIATIONS.

Ver. 21.] Ed. 4th and 5th.

Show by what rules the wand'ring planets stray,
Correct old Time, and teach the Sun his way. *Warburton.*

Superior beings, when of late they saw
A mortal Man unfold all Nature's law,

COMMENTARY.

Ver. 31. *Superior beings, &c.*] To give this second argument its full force, he illustrates it (from ver. 30 to 43.) by the noblest example that ever was in science, the incomparable NEWTON; who, although he penetrated so far beyond others into the works of GOD, yet could go no farther in the knowledge of his own nature than the generality of his fellows. Of which the Poet assigns this very just and adequate reason: In all *other sciences* the Understanding is unchecked and uncontrolled by any opposite principle; but in the science of *Man*, the Passions overturn as fast as Reason can build up.

NOTES.

science, and *imaginary* intimacy with God; go, and run into all the extravagances I have exploded in the first epistle, where thou pretendest to teach Providence how to govern; then drop into the obscurities of thy own nature, and thereby manifest thy ignorance and folly. *Warburton.*

Ver. 31. *Superior beings, &c.*] In these lines the Poet speaks to this effect: "But to make you fully sensible of the difficulty of this study, I shall instance in the great Newton himself; whom, when superior beings, not long since, saw capable of unfolding the whole law of Nature, they were in doubt whether the owner of such prodigious sagacity should not be reckoned of their order; just as men, when they see the surprising marks of Reason in an Ape, are almost tempted to rank him with their own kind." And yet this wondrous man could go no further in the knowledge of himself, than the generality of his species. M. Du Resnel, who understood nothing of all this, translates these four celebrated lines thus:

"Des célestes Esprits la vive intelligence
Regarde *avec pitié notre foible Science;*
Newton, le grand Newton, que nous admirons tous,
Est peut-être pour eux, *ce qu'un Singe est pour nous.*"

But it is not the *pity*, but the *admiration* of those celestial Spirits which is here spoken of. And it was for no slight cause they admired; it was, *to see a mortal man unfold the whole law of Nature.*

By

Admir'd such wisdom in an earthly shape,
And shew'd a NEWTON as we shew an Ape.

NOTES.

By which we see it was not Mr. Pope's intention to bring any of the Ape's *qualities*, but its *sagacity*, into the comparison. But why the *Ape*'s, it may be said, rather than the sagacity of some more decent animal, particularly the *half-reasoning elephant*, as the poet calls it; which, as well on account of this its excellence, as for its having no ridiculous side, like the Ape, on which it could be viewed, seems better to have deserved this honour? I reply, Because, as a shape resembling human (which only the Ape has) must be joined with great sagacity, to raise a suspicion that the animal, thus endowed, is related to man: so the spirituality, which Newton had in common with Angels, joined to a penetration superior to Man, made those Beings suspect he might be one of their order. On this ground of relation, we see the whole beauty of the thought depends.—And here let me take notice of a new species of the sublime, of which our poet may be justly said to be the maker; so new, that we have yet no name for it, though of a nature distinct from every other known beauty of poetry. The two great perfections in works of genius, are WIT and SUBLIMITY. Many writers have been witty; some have been sublime; and a few have even possessed both these qualities separately. But none, that I know of, besides our poet, hath had the art to INCORPORATE them; of which he hath given many examples, both in this Essay, and his other poems; one of the noblest being the passage in question. This seems to be the last effort of the imagination to poetical perfection: and, in this compounded excellence, the wit receives a dignity from the sublime, and the sublime a splendour from the wit; which, in their state of separate existence, they neither of them had. Yet a late critic, who writes with the decision of a Lord of Session on Parnassus, thinks otherwise: "It may be gathered," says he, "from what is said above, "that wit and ridicule make not an agreeable mixture with gran-"deur. Dissimilar emotions have a fine effect in a slow succes-"sion; but in a rapid succession which approaches to co-exist-"ence, they will not be relished."* What pity is it, that the poet should

* Elements of Criticism, vol. i. p. 377.

Could he, whose rules the rapid comet bind,
Describe or fix one movement of his mind?
Who saw its fires here rise, and there descend,
Explain his own beginning, or his end?

NOTES.

should here confute the critic, by DOING what the critic, with his *rules*, teaches us cannot be done. Boileau, who was both poet and critic, had a clear view of this excellence in idea; while the mere critic had no idea of what had been clearly set before his eyes.

" ON PEUT ETRE A LA FOIS ET POMPEUX ET PLAISANT;
Et je hais un SUBLIME ennuyeux et pesant." *Warburton.*

Ver. 34. *as we shew an Ape.*] Evidently borrowed from the following passage in the Zodiac of Palingenius, and not, as hath been suggested by Dr. Hurd, from Plato. Pope was a reader and publisher of the modern poets of Italy who wrote in Latin. The words are,

" Simia Cœlicolum risusq; jocusq; Deorum est
Tunc Homo, cum temerè ingenio confidit, et audet
Abdita Naturæ scrutari, arcanaq; Divum."
Warton.

This is, however, an entirely different sense from that in which Pope has used the similitude, in the one case the superior beings *admire the wisdom*, in the other, they *laugh at the folly*.

Ver. 37. *Who saw its fires here rise, &c.*] Sir Isaac Newton, in calculating the velocity of a comet's motion, and the course it describes, when it becomes visible in its descent to, and ascent from, the sun, conjectured, with the highest appearance of truth, that comets revolve perpetually round the sun, in ellipses vastly eccentrical, and very nearly approaching to parabolas. In which he was greatly confirmed, in observing between two comets a coincidence in their perihelions, and a perfect agreement in their velocities.
Warburton.

VARIATIONS.

Ver. 35.] Ed. 1st.

Could he, who taught each Planet where to roll,
Describe or fix one movement of the Soul?
Who mark'd their points to rise, or to descend,
Explain his own beginning, or his end? *Warburton.*

Alas, what wonder! Man's superior part
Uncheck'd may rise, and climb from art to art;
But when his own great work is but begun,
What Reason weaves, by Passion is undone.

Trace Science then, with Modesty thy guide:
First strip off all her equipage of pride;

COMMENTARY.

Ver. 43. *Trace Science then, &c.*] The conclusion, therefore, from the whole is (from ver. 42 to 53.), that as, on the one hand, we should persist in the study of Nature; so, on the other, in order to arrive at Science, we should proceed in the simplicity of truth; and then the produce, though small, will yet be real.

NOTES.

Ver. 44. *First strip off*] The abuses of learning are enumerated with brevity and elegance in these few lines. It was a favourite subject with our author; and it is said he intended to have written four Epistles on it, wherein he would have treated of the extent and limits of human reason; of arts and sciences useful and attainable; of the different capacities of different men; of the knowledge of the world; and of wit. Such censures, even of the most unimportant parts of literature, should not, however, be carried too far; and a sensible writer observes, that there is not indeed any part of knowledge which can be called entirely useless. "The most abstracted parts of mathematics, and the knowledge of mythological history, or ancient allegories, have their own pleasures, not inferior to the more gay entertainments of painting, music, or architecture; and it is for the advantage of mankind that some are found who have a taste for these studies. The only fault lies in letting any of those inferior tastes engross the whole man, to the exclusion of the nobler pursuits of virtue and humanity." Hutcheson's Nature and Conduct of the Passions, p. 179. We may here apply an elegant observation of Tully, who says, in his Brutus, "Credo, sed Atheniensium quoque plus interfuit firma tecta in domiciliis habere, quam Minervæ signum ex ebore pulcherrimum: tamen ego me Phidiam esse mallem quam vel optimum fabrum lignarium; quare non quantum quisque profit, sed quanti quisque sit, ponderandum est: præsertim cum pauci pingere egregiè possint aut fingere, operarii autem aut bajuli deesse non possint." *Warton.*

Deduct what is but vanity, or dress,
Or Learning's luxury, or idleness;
Or tricks to shew the stretch of human brain,
Mere curious pleasure, or ingenious pain;
Expunge the whole, or lop th' excrescent parts
Of all our Vices have created Arts;
Then see how little the remaining sum,
Which serv'd the past, and must the times to come!

NOTES.

Ver. 45. *vanity, or dress,*] These are the first parts of what the Poet, in the preceding line, calls the scholar's *equipage of pride.* By *vanity* is meant that luxuriancy of thought and expression in which a writer indulges himself, to shew the fruitfulness of his fancy or invention. By *dress,* is to be understood a lower degree of that practice, in amplification of thought and ornamental expression, to give force to what the writer would convey: but even this, the Poet, in a severe search after truth, condemns; and with great judgment; conciseness of thought, and simplicity of expression, being as well the best *instruments,* as the best *vehicles* of truth. *Shakespear* touches upon this latter advantage with great force and humour. The flatterer says to *Timon* in distress, "I cannot *cover* the monstrous *bulk* of their ingratitude with any *size* of words." The other replies, "Let it go *naked;* men may see't the better." *Warburton.*

Ver. 46. *Or Learning's luxury, or idleness;*] The *luxury of Learning* consists in dressing up and disguising old notions in a new way, so as to make them more fashionable and palatable; instead of examining and scrutinizing their truth. As this is often done for pomp and shew, it is called *luxury;* as it is often done too to save pains and labour, it is called *idleness.* *Warburton.*

Ver. 47. *Or tricks to shew the stretch of human brain,*] Such as the mathematical demonstrations concerning the *small quantity of matter;* the *endless divisibility* of it, &c. *Warburton.*

Ver. 48. *Mere curious pleasure, or ingenious pain;*] *i. e.* when *Admiration* has set the mind on the rack. *Warburton.*

Ver. 49. *Expunge the whole, or lop th' excrescent parts*
Of all our Vices have created Arts;]

i. e. Those parts of natural Philosophy, Logic, Rhetoric, Poetry, &c. which administer to luxury, deceit, ambition, effeminacy, &c. *Warburton.*

II. Two Principles in human nature reign;
Self-love, to urge, and Reason, to restrain;
Nor this a good, nor that a bad we call;
Each works its end, to move or govern all:
And to their proper operation still,
Ascribe all Good; to their improper, Ill.
Self-love, the spring of motion, acts the soul;
Reason's comparing balance rules the whole.
Man, but for that, no action could attend,
And, but for this, were active to no end;
Fix'd like a plant on his peculiar spot,
To draw nutrition, propagate, and rot;

COMMENTARY.

Ver. 53. *Two Principles, &c.*] The Poet having shewn the difficulty which attends the study of Man, proceeds to remove it, by laying before us the elements or true principles of this science, in an account of the *Origin*, *Use*, and *End* of the PASSIONS; which, in my opinion, contains the truest, clearest, shortest, and consequently the best system of Ethics that is any where to be met with. He begins (from ver. 52 to 59.) with pointing out the two grand Principles in human nature, SELF-LOVE and REASON. Describes their general nature: The first sets Man upon acting, the other regulates his action. However, these principles are *natural*, not *moral;* and therefore, in themselves, neither good nor evil, but so only as they are directed. This observation is made with great judgment, in opposition to the desperate folly of those Fanatics, who, as the Ascetic, vainly pretend to eradicate Self-love; or, as the Mystic, are more successful in stifling Reason; and both, on the absurd fancy of their being *moral*, not *natural*, principles.

Ver. 59. *Self-love, the spring of motion, acts the soul;*] The Poet proceeds (from ver. 58 to 67.), more minutely to mark out the distinct offices of these two Principles, which offices he had before assigned only in general; and here he shews their necessity; for without Self-love, as the *spring*, Man would be unactive; and, without Reason as the *balance*, active to no purpose.

NOTES.

Ver. 59. *acts the soul;*], *acts*, for *actuates*. *Bowles.*

Or, meteor-like, flame lawless through the void, 65
Destroying others, by himself destroy'd.
Most strength the moving principle requires:
Active its task, it prompts, impels, inspires.
Sedate and quiet, the comparing lies,
Form'd but to check, deliberate, and advise. 70
Self-love still stronger, as its objects nigh;
Reason's at distance, and in prospect lie:
That sees immediate good by present sense;
Reason, the future and the consequence.
Thicker than arguments, temptations throng; 75
At best more watchful this, but that more strong.

COMMENTARY.

Ver. 67. *Most strength the moving principle requires:*] Having thus explained the ends and offices of each Principle, he goes on (from ver. 66 to 79.) to speak of their qualities; and shews how they are fitted to discharge those functions, and answer their respective intentions. The business of Self-love being to excite to action, it is quick and impetuous; and moving instinctively, has, like attraction, its force prodigiously increased as the object approaches, and proportionably lessened as it recedes. On the contrary, Reason, like the Author of attraction, is always calm and sedate, and equally preserves itself, whether the object be near or far off. Hence the moving principle is made more strong, though the restraining be more quick-sighted. The consequence he draws from this is, that if we would not be carried away to our destruction, we must always keep Reason upon guard.

NOTES.

Ver. 74. *Reason, the future, &c.*] i. e. by *experience*, reason collects the future; and by *argumentation*, the consequence.

Warburton.

Ver. 74. *Reason, the future, &c.*] From Bacon: "The *Affections* carry ever an appetite to good, as *Reason* doth. The difference is, that the Affection beholdeth *merely* the *present*; Reason beholdeth the *future* and *sum* of time." *Bowles.*

The action of the stronger to suspend
Reason still use, to Reason still attend.
Attention, habit and experience gains;
Each strengthens Reason, and Self-love restrains.
Let subtle schoolmen teach these friends to fight,
More studious to divide than to unite;

COMMENTARY.

Ver. 79. *Attention, &c.*] But it would be objected, that, if this account be true, human life would be most miserable; and, even in the wisest, a perpetual conflict between reason and the passions. To this, therefore, the Poet replies (from ver. 78 to 81.), first, that Providence has so graciously contrived, that even in the voluntary exercise of reason, as in the mechanic motion of a limb, habit makes what was at first done with pain, easy and natural. And secondly, that the experience gained by the long exercise of reason, goes a great way towards eluding the force of self-love. Now the attending to reason, as here recommended, will gain us this habit and experience. Hence it appears, that our station, in which reason is to be kept constantly upon guard, is not so uneasy a one as may be at first imagined.

Ver. 81. *Let subtle schoolmen, &c.*] From this description of Self-love and Reason, it follows, as the Poet observes (from ver. 80 to 93.), that both conspire to one end, namely, human happiness, though they be not equally expert in the choice of the means; the difference being this, that the first hastily seizes every thing which hath the appearance of good; the other weighs and examines whether it be indeed what it appears.

This shews, as he next observes, the folly of the schoolmen, who consider them as two opposite principles, the one good and the other evil. The observation is seasonable and judicious; for this dangerous school-opinion gives great support to the Manichean or Zoroastrian error, the confutation of which was one of the author's chief ends in writing. For if there be *two principles* in Man, a *good* and *evil*, it is natural to think him the joint product of the two Manichean Deities (the first of which contributed to his *Reason*, the other to his *Passions*), rather than the creature of one Individual Cause. This was Plutarch's opinion, and, as we may

And Grace and Virtue, Sense and Reason split,
With all the rash dexterity of wit.
Wits, just like fools, at war about a name,
Have full as oft no meaning, or the same.
Self-love and Reason to one end aspire,
Pain their aversion, pleasure their desire;
But greedy That, its object would devour,
This taste the honey, and not wound the flow'r:
Pleasure, or wrong or rightly understood,
Our greatest evil, or our greatest good.

III. Modes of Self-love the passions we may call;
'Tis real good, or seeming, moves them all:

COMMENTARY.

may see in him, of some of the more ancient theistical Philosophers. It was of importance, therefore, to reprobate and subvert a notion that served to the support of so dangerous an error; and this the Poet hath done with much force and clearness.

Ver. 93. *Modes of Self-love, &c.*] Having given this account of the nature of Self-love in general, he comes now to anatomize it, in a discourse on the PASSIONS, which he aptly names the MODES OF SELF-LOVE. The object of all these, he shews (from ver. 92 to 101.) is *good;* and, when under the guidance of reason, *real good,* either of ourselves, or of another; for some goods not being capable of division, or communication, and reason at the same time directing us to provide for ourselves, we therefore, in pursuit of these objects, sometimes aim at our own good, sometimes at the good of others. When fairly aiming at our own, the quality is called *Prudence;* when at another's, *Virtue.*

Hence (as he shews from ver. 100 to 105.) appears the folly of the Stoics, who would eradicate the Passions, things so necessary both

VARIATIONS.

After ver. 86. in the MS.

Of good and evil Gods what frighted fools,
Of good and evil Reason puzzled schools,
Deceiv'd, deceiving, taught—— *Warburton.*

But since not ev'ry good we can divide,
And Reason bids us for our own provide,
Passions, though selfish, if their means be fair,
List under Reason, and deserve her care;
Those, that imparted, court a nobler aim,
Exalt their kind, and take some virtue's name.
In lazy apathy let Stoics boast
Their virtue fix'd; 'tis fix'd as in a frost;

COMMENTARY.

both to the good of the Individual and of the Kind. Which preposterous method of promoting Virtue he therefore very reasonably reproves.

NOTES.

Ver. 101. *In lazy apathy*] Swift observes, that "the Stoical scheme of supplying our wants by lopping off our passions, is like cutting off our legs for want of shoes." How easy is it to expose assertions which were never asserted; to refute tenets which were never held; to become St. George when we make our own dragons! What says old Epictetus, who knew Stoicism better than these men? ὁ γὰρ δεῖ με εἶναι ΑΠΑΘΗ ὡς Ανδριάντα, &c. "I am NOT to be APATHETIC, or VOID OF PASSIONS, LIKE A STATUE. I am to discharge all the relations of a social and friendly life, the parent, the husband, the brother, the magistrate." From a manuscript of the late James Harris, Esq. author of Hermes, &c. Perhaps a stronger example cannot be found, of taking notions upon trust without any examination, than the universal censure that has been passed upon the Stoics, as if they constantly and strenuously inculcated a total insensibility with respect to passion, to which these lines of Pope allude; when it is certain the Stoics meant only a freedom from strong perturbation, from irrational and excessive agitations of the soul; and no more. *Warton.*

Ver. 101. *In lazy apathy*] Adam Smith's account of the Philosophy of the Stoics, in his Theory of Moral Sentiments, is the most just. That sublime system is put in a new light, and the magnanimity which they professed *themselves*, contrasted with the benevolence they were equally required to shew to others. See Chapter on the Stoic Philosophy. *Bowles.*

Contracted all, retiring to the breast;
But strength of mind is exercise, not rest:
The rising tempest puts in act the soul,
Parts it may ravage, but preserves the whole.
On life's vast ocean diversely we sail,
Reason the card, but Passion is the gale;

COMMENTARY.

Ver. 105. *The rising tempest puts in act the soul,*] But as it was from observation of the evils occasioned by the Passions, that the Stoics thus extravagantly projected their extirpation, the Poet recurs (from ver. 104 to 111.) to his grand principle, so often before, and to so good purpose, insisted on, that *partial Ill is universal Good;* and shews, that though the tempest of the Passions, like that of the air, may tear and ravage some few parts of Nature in its passage, yet the salutary agitation produced by it preserves the whole in life and vigour. This is his *first* argument against the Stoics, which he illustrates by a very beautiful similitude, on a hint taken from Scripture:

" Nor God alone in the still calm we find;
He mounts the storm, and walks upon the wind."

NOTES.

Ver. 105. *The rising tempest, &c.*] From factions, and ferments, and political agitations, and commotions, and wars, arise the most striking and vigorous exertions of the human mind. Witness what happened in Greece, and Rome, and modern Italy; in France after the league; and in England after, and in, our civil war. Great occasions call forth great and latent abilities; and every man becomes capable of every exertion. A Socrates and a Sophocles were found, alone, in the time of Themistocles and Thrasybulus. The dead calm of despotism, in such a government as China, for instance, crushes and overwhelms all effort and all emulation. *Warton.*

VARIATIONS.

After ver. 108. in the MS.

A tedious voyage! where how useless lies
The compass, if no pow'rful gust arise? *Warburton.*

Nor God alone in the still calm we find;
He mounts the storm, and walks upon the wind. 110

NOTES.

Ver. 108. *Reason the card,*] This passage is exactly copied from Fontenelle, tom. i. p. 109.

" Ce sont les passions qui font et qui defont tout. Si la raison dominoit sur la terre, il ne s'y passeroit rien. On dit que les pilotes craignent au dernier point ces mers pacifiques, où l'ont ne peut naviger, et qu'ils veulent du vent, au hazard d'avoir des tempêtes. Les passions sont chez des hommes des vents qui sont nécessaires, pour mettre tout en mouvement, quoiqu'ils causent souvent les orages." He had also copied Fontenelle before, in Epistle i. v. 290.

" All chance, direction which thou canst not see,"

" Tout est hazard dans le monde, pourvû que l'on donne ce nom à un ordre que l'on ne connoit point." Tom. i. p. 81. *Warton.*

The idea is also in Bacon:—" The mind would be temperate and stayed, if the affections, *as winds*, did not put it into tumult." *Bowles.*

Ver. 109. *Nor God alone* in the still calm *we find;*
He mounts the storm, *and walks upon the wind.*]

The translator turns it thus:

" Dieu lui-même, Dieu sort de *son profond repos.*"

And so, makes an *Epicurean* God, of the Governor of the Universe. M. de Crousaz does not spare this expression of *God's coming out of his profound repose.* " It is," says he, " excessively poetical, and presents us with ideas which we ought not to dwell upon," &c. and then, as usual, blames the author for the blunder of his translator. *Comm.* p. 158. *Warburton.*

Ver. 109. *Nor God alone, &c.*] These words are only a simple affirmation in the poetic dress of a similitude, to this purpose: Good is not only produced by the subdual of the Passions, but by the turbulent exercise of them. A truth conveyed under the most sublime imagery that poetry could conceive or paint. For the author is here only shewing the providential issue of the Passions; and how, by God's gracious disposition, they are turned away from their natural destructive bias, to promote the happiness of mankind. As to the method in which they are to be treated by man, in whom they are found, all that he contends for, in favour of

Passions, like elements, tho' born to fight,
Yet, mix'd and soften'd, in his work unite:
These, 'tis enough to temper and employ;
But what composes Man, can Man destroy?
Suffice that Reason keep to Nature's road,
Subject, compound them, follow her and God.
Love, Hope, and Joy, fair Pleasure's smiling train,
Hate, Fear, and Grief, the family of Pain,
These mix'd with art, and to due bounds confin'd,
Make and maintain the balance of the mind:

COMMENTARY.

Ver. 111. *Passions, like elements, &c.*] His *second* argument against the Stoics (from ver. 110 to 133.) is, that Passions go to the composition of a moral character, just as elementary particles go to the composition of an organized body. Therefore, for man to project the destruction of what composes his very being, is the height of extravagance. 'Tis true, he tells us, that these Passions, which in their natural state, like elements, are in perpetual jar, must be tempered, softened, and united, in order to perfect the work of the great plastic Artist; who, in this office, employs human Reason; whose business it is to follow the road of Nature, and to observe the dictates of the Deity;—*Follow her and God.* The use and importance of this precept is evident: for in doing the first, she will discover the absurdity of attempting to eradicate the Passions; in doing the second, she will learn how to make them subservient to the interests of Virtue.

NOTES.

of them, is only this, that they should not be quite rooted up and destroyed, as the Stoics, and their followers, in all religions, foolishly attempted. For the rest, he constantly repeats this advice,

" The action of the stronger to suspend,
Reason still use, to Reason still attend." *Warburton.*

VARIATIONS.

After ver. 112. in the MS.

The soft reward the virtuous, or invite;
The fierce, the vicious punish or affright. *Warburton.*

The lights and shades, whose well-accorded strife
Gives all the strength and colour of our life.
Pleasures are ever in our hands or eyes;
And when, in act, they cease, in prospect, rise:
Present to grasp, and future still to find,
The whole employ of body and of mind.
All spread their charms, but charm not all alike;
On different senses different objects strike;

COMMENTARY.

Ver. 123. *Pleasures are ever in our hands or eyes;*] His *third* argument against the Stoics (from ver. 122 to 127.) is, that the Passions are a continual spur to the pursuit of Happiness; which, without these powerful inciters, we should neglect, and sink into a senseless indolence. Now Happiness is the *end* of our creation; and this excitement, the *means* to that end; therefore, these movers, the Passions, are the instruments of God, which he hath put into the hands of Reason to work withal.

Ver. 127. *All spread their charms, &c.*] The Poet now proceeds in his subject; and this last observation leads him naturally to the discussion of his next principle. He shews then, that though all the Passions have their turn in swaying the determinations of the mind, yet every man hath one MASTER PASSION, that at length stifles or absorbs all the rest. The fact he illustrates at large in his Epistle to Lord Cobham. Here (from ver. 126 to 149.) he giveth us the CAUSE of it. Those Pleasures or Goods, which are the objects of the Passions, affect the mind by striking on the senses; but as, through the formation of the organs of our frame, every man hath some one sense stronger and more acute than others, the object which strikes the stronger or acuter sense, whatever it be, will be the object most desired; and consequently, the pursuit of that will be the *ruling Passion:* That the difference of force in this ruling Passion, shall, at first, perhaps, be very small, or even imperceptible;

NOTES.

Ver. 128. *On different senses*] A didactic poet has thus nobly illustrated this very doctrine:

——" Different minds
Incline to different objects: one pursues

The

Hence different Passions more or less inflame,
As strong or weak, the organs of the frame;
And hence one MASTER PASSION in the breast,
Like Aaron's serpent, swallows up the rest.

As Man, perhaps, the moment of his breath,
Receives the lurking principle of death;
The young disease, that must subdue at length,
Grows with his growth, and strengthens with his strength:

COMMENTARY.

imperceptible; but Nature, Habit, Imagination, Wit, nay even reason itself, shall assist its growth, till it hath at length drawn and converted every other into itself. All which is delivered in a strain of poetry so wonderfully sublime, as suspends, for a while, the *ruling Passion* in every reader, and engrosses his whole admiration.

This naturally leads the Poet to lament the weakness and insufficiency of human Reason (from ver. 148 to 161.); and the purpose he had in so doing, was plainly to intimate THE NECESSITY OF A MORE PERFECT DISPENSATION TO MANKIND.

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The vast alone, the wonderful, the wild;
Another sighs for harmony, and grace,
And gentlest beauty. Hence, when lightning fires
The arch of heaven, and thunders rock the ground;
When furious whirlwinds rend the howling air,
And Ocean, groaning from the lowest bed,
Heaves his tempestuous billows to the sky;
Amid the mighty uproar, while below
The nations tremble, Shakespear looks abroad
From some high cliff, superior, and enjoys
The elemental war. But Waller longs
All on the margin of some flowery stream,
To spread his careless limbs, amid the cool
Of plantain shades." AKENSIDE. *Warton.*

Ver. 133. *As Man, perhaps, &c.*] "Antipater Sidonius Poeta omnibus annis uno die natali tantum corripiebatur febre, et eo consumptus est satis longâ senectâ." *Plin.* l. vii. *N. H.* This *Anti-*

So, cast and mingled with his very frame,
The Mind's disease, its RULING PASSION, came;
Each vital humour which should feed the whole,
Soon flows to this, in body and in soul:
Whatever warms the heart, or fills the head,
As the mind opens, and its functions spread,
Imagination plies her dangerous art,
And pours it all upon the peccant part.
Nature its mother, Habit is its nurse;
Wit, Spirit, Faculties, but make it worse;
Reason itself but gives it edge and pow'r;
As Heav'n's blest beam turns vinegar more sour.
We, wretched subjects, tho' to lawful sway,
In this weak queen, some fav'rite still obey.

NOTES.

pater was in the times of Crassus, and is celebrated for the quickness of his parts by Cicero. *Warburton.*

Ver. 147. *Reason itself, &c.*] The Poet, in some other of his Epistles, gives examples of the doctrines and precepts here delivered. Thus, in that *Of the Use of Riches*, he has illustrated this truth in the character of Cotta:

" Old Cotta sham'd his fortune and his birth,
Yet was not Cotta void of wit or worth.
What though (the use of barb'rous spits forgot)
His kitchen vied in coolness with his grot?
If Cotta liv'd on pulse, it was no more
Than bramins, saints, and sages did before." *Warburton.*

Ver. 148. *turns vinegar*] Taken from Bacon, De Calore; and the preceding verse, and comparison, 132.

" Like Aaron's serpent,"——

is from Bacon likewise. *Warton.*

Ver. 149. *We, wretched subjects, &c.*] St. Paul himself did not choose to employ other arguments, when disposed to give us the highest idea of the usefulness of CHRISTIANITY, (*Rom.* vii.) But it may be, the Poet finds a remedy in NATURAL RELIGION. Far from

Ah! if she lend not arms, as well as rules,
What can she more than tell us we are fools?
Teach us to mourn our nature, not to mend,
A sharp accuser, but a helpless friend!
Or from a judge turn pleader, to persuade
The choice we make, or justify it made;
Proud of an easy conquest all along,
She but removes weak Passions for the strong:
So, when small humours gather to a gout,
The doctor fancies he has driv'n them out.
Yes, Nature's road must ever be preferr'd;
Reason is here no guide, but still a guard:
'Tis hers to rectify, not overthrow,
And treat this passion more as friend than foe:
A mightier Pow'r the strong direction sends,
And several men impels to several ends:

COMMENTARY.

Ver. 161. *Yes, Nature's road, &c.*] Now as it appears from the account here given of the *ruling Passion* and its cause (which results from the structure of the organs), that it is the road of Nature, the Poet shews (from ver. 160 to 197.) that this road is to be followed. So that the office of Reason is not to direct us what passion to exercise, but to assist us in RECTIFYING, and keeping within due bounds, that which Nature hath so strongly impressed; because

" A mightier Power the strong direction sends,
And several Men impels to several ends."

NOTES.

from it. He here leaves Reason unrelieved. What is this then, but an intimation that we ought to seek for a cure in that religion, which only dares profess to give it? *Warburton.*

Ver. 163. *'Tis hers to rectify, &c.*] The meaning of this precept is, That as the ruling Passion is implanted by Nature, it is Reason's office to regulate, direct, and restrain, but not to overthrow it. To reform the passion of Avarice, for instance, into a parsimonious

Like varying winds, by other passions tost,
This drives them constant to a certain coast.
Let pow'r or knowledge, gold or glory, please;
Or (oft more strong than all) the love of ease; 170

COMMENTARY.

Ver. 167. *Like varying winds, &c.*] The Poet having proved that the *ruling passion* (since Nature hath given it us) is not to be overthrown, but *rectified;* the next inquiry will be, of what *use* the ruling passion is; for an use it must have, if reason be to treat it thus mildly. This use he shews us (from ver. 166 to 197.) is twofold, Natural and Moral.

1. Its *Natural* use is to conduct men steadily to one certain end, who would otherwise be eternally fluctuating between the equal violence of various and discordant passions, driving them up and down at random; and, by that means, to enable them to promote the good of society, by making each a contributor to the common stock:

" Let pow'r or knowledge, gold or glory, please," &c.

2. Its *Moral* use is to ingraft our ruling Virtue upon it; and by that means to enable us to promote our own good, by turning the exorbitancy of the *ruling Passion* into its neighbouring Virtue:

" See anger, zeal and fortitude supply," &c.

The wisdom of the Divine Artist is, as the Poet finely observes, very illustrious in this contrivance; for the mind and body having now

NOTES.

parsimonious dispensation of the public revenues: to direct the passion of Love, whose object is worth and beauty,

" To the first good, first perfect, and first fair,"

the τὸ καλὸν τ' ἀγαθὸν, as his master Plato advises; and to restrain Spleen to a contempt and hatred of Vice. This is what the Poet meant; and what every unprejudiced man could not but see he must needs mean, by RECTIFYING THE MASTER PASSION, though he had not confined us to this sense, in the reason he gives of his precept in these words:

" A mightier Pow'r the strong direction sends,
And several Men impels to several ends;"

for what ends are they which God impels to, but the ends of Virtue. *Warburton.*

Through life 'tis follow'd, even at life's expense;
The merchant's toil, the sage's indolence,
The monk's humility, the hero's pride,
All, all alike, find reason on their side.
Th' Eternal Art educing good from ill,
Grafts on this Passion our best principle:
'Tis thus the Mercury of Man is fix'd;
Strong grows the Virtue with his nature mix'd;
The dross cements what else were too refin'd,
And in one interest body acts with mind.
As fruits, ungrateful to the planter's care,
On savage stocks inserted, learn to bear;
The surest Virtues thus from Passions shoot,
Wild Nature's vigour working at the root.
What crops of wit and honesty appear
From spleen, from obstinacy, hate, or fear!
See anger, zeal and fortitude supply;
Ev'n avarice, prudence; sloth, philosophy;
Lust, through some certain strainers well refin'd,
Is gentle love, and charms all womankind;
Envy, to which the ignoble mind's a slave,
Is emulation in the learn'd or brave;
Nor Virtue, male or female, can we name,
But what will grow on pride, or grow on shame.

COMMENTARY.

now one common interest, the efforts of Virtue will have their force infinitely augmented:

" 'Tis thus the mercury," &c.

VARIATIONS.

After ver. 194. in the MS.

" How oft, with Passion, Virtue points her charms!
Then shines the Hero, then the Patriot warms.

Peleus'

Thus Nature gives us (let it check our pride)
The virtue nearest to our vice allied:
Reason the bias turns to good from ill,
And Nero reigns a Titus, if he will.

COMMENTARY.

Ver. 197. *Reason the bias, &c.*] But lest it should be objected that this account favours the doctrine of Necessity, and would insinuate that men are only acted upon, in the production of good out of evil; the Poet teacheth (from ver. 196 to 203.) that Man is a free agent, and hath it in his power to turn the natural passions into virtues or into vices, properly so called:

"Reason the bias turns to good from ill,
And Nero reigns a Titus, if he will."

Secondly, If it should be objected, that though he doth, indeed, tell us some actions are beneficial and some hurtful, yet he could not call those *virtuous*, nor these *vicious*, because, as he hath described things, the motive appears to be only the gratification of some passion; give me leave to answer for him, that this would be mistaking the argument, which (to ver. 249 of this Epistle) considers the passions only with regard to *Society*, that is, with regard to their *effects* rather than their *motives:* That, however, it is

VARIATIONS.

Peleus' great son, or Brutus, who had known,
Had Lucrece been a whore, or Helen none?
But Virtues opposite to make agree,
That, Reason! is thy task; and worthy thee.
Hard task, cries Bibulus, and Reason weak.
—Make it a point, dear Marquess! or a pique.
Once, for a whim, persuade yourself to pay
A debt to Reason, like a debt at play.
For right or wrong have mortals suffer'd more?
B— for his Prince, or * * for his whore?
Whose self-denials Nature must control?
His, who would save a sixpence, or his soul?
Web for his health, a Chartreux for his sin,
Contend they not which soonest shall grow thin?
What we resolve we can: but here's the fault,
We ne'er resolve to do the thing we ought. *Warburton.*

The fiery soul abhorr'd in Catiline,
In Decius charms, in Curtius is divine:
The same ambition can destroy or save,
And makes a patriot as it makes a knave.
This light and darkness in our chaos join'd,
What shall divide? The God within the mind.
Extremes in Nature equal ends produce;
In Man they join to some mysterious use;

COMMENTARY.

is his design to teach that actions are *properly virtuous and vicious;* and though it be difficult to distinguish genuine virtue from spurious, they having both the same appearance, and both the same public effects, yet that they may be disentangled. If it be asked, by what means? he replies (from ver. 202 to 205.) by Conscience;—*the God within the mind;*—and this is to the purpose; for it is a Man's own concern, and no one's else, to know whether his virtue be pure and solid; for what is it to others, whether this virtue (while, as to them, the effect of it is the same) be real or imaginary?

Ver. 205. *Extremes in Nature equal ends produce, &c.*] But still it will be said, Why all this difficulty to distinguish true virtue from false? The Poet shews why (from ver. 204 to 211.); That though indeed vice and virtue so invade each other's bounds, that sometimes we can scarce tell where one ends and the other begins, yet great purposes are served thereby, no less than the perfecting the constitution of the Whole, as lights and shades, which run into one

NOTES.

Ver. 204. *The God within the mind.*] A Platonic phrase for CONSCIENCE; and here employed with great judgment and propriety. For conscience either signifies, speculatively, the judgment we pass of things upon whatever principles we chance to have, and then it is only Opinion, a very unable judge and divider; or else it signifies, practically, the application of the eternal rule of right (received by us as the law of God) to the regulation of our actions; and then it is properly Conscience, *the God* (or the law of God) *within the mind,* of power to divide the light from the darkness in this Chaos of the passions. *Warburton.*

Tho' each by turns the other's bound invade,
As, in some well-wrought picture, light and shade,
And oft so mix, the diff'rence is too nice
Where ends the Virtue, or begins the Vice.
  Fools! who from hence into the notion fall,
That Vice or Virtue there is none at all.
If white and black blend, soften, and unite
A thousand ways, is there no black or white?
Ask your own heart, and nothing is so plain;
'Tis to mistake them, costs the time and pain.
  Vice is a monster of so frightful mien,
As, to be hated, needs but to be seen;

COMMENTARY.

one another insensibly in a well-wrought picture, make the harmony and spirit of the composition. But on this account to say there is neither vice nor virtue, the Poet shews (from ver. 210 to 217.) would be just as wise as to say, there is neither black nor white, because the shade of that, and the light of this, often run into one another, and are mutually lost:

"Ask your own heart, and nothing is so plain;
'Tis to mistake them, costs the time and pain."

This is an error of *speculation*, which leads men so foolishly to conclude, that there is neither vice nor virtue.

Ver. 217. *Vice is a monster, &c.*] There is another error, an error of *practice*, which hath more general and hurtful effects; and is next considered (from ver. 216 to 221.). It is this, that though, at the first aspect, Vice be so horrible as to fright the beholder, yet, when by habit we are once grown familiar with her, we first suffer, and in time begin to lose the memory of her nature; which necessarily implies an equal ignorance in the nature of Virtue. Hence men conclude, that there is neither one nor the other.

NOTES.

Ver. 217. *Vice is a monster, &c.*] "Hence we find," says that amiable moralist, Hutcheson, "that the basest actions are dressed

in

Yet seen too oft, familiar with her face,
We first endure, then pity, then embrace.
But where th' extreme of Vice, was ne'er agreed:
Ask where's the North? at York, 'tis on the Tweed;
In Scotland, at the Orcades; and there,
At Greenland, Zembla, or the Lord knows where.
No creature owns it in the first degree,
But thinks his neighbour farther gone than he;
Ev'n those who dwell beneath its very zone,
Or never feel the rage, or never own;

COMMENTARY.

Ver. 221. *But where th' extreme of Vice, &c.*] But it is not only that extreme of Vice which stands next to Virtue, which betrays us into these mistakes. We are deceived too, as he shews us (from ver. 220 to 231.) by our observations concerning the other extreme. For, from the extreme of Vice being unsettled, Men conclude that Vice itself is only nominal, at least rather comparative than real.

NOTES.

in some tolerable mask:"—"What others call avarice, appears to the agent a prudent care of a family or friends; fraud, artful conduct; malice and revenge, a just sense of honour; fire and sword, and desolation among enemies, a just thorough defence of our country; persecution, a zeal for truth, and for the eternal happiness of men, which heretics oppose." *Warton.*

VARIATIONS.

After ver. 220. in the first Edition, followed these:

A cheat! a whore! who starts not at the name,
In all the Inns of Court or Drury-lane?

After ver. 226. in the MS.

The Col'nel swears the Agent is a dog,
The Scriv'ner vows th' Attorney is a rogue.
Against the Thief, th' Attorney loud inveighs,
For whose ten pound the County twenty pays.
The Thief damns Judges, and the knaves of State;
And dying, mourns small villains hang'd by great.

Warburton.

What happier natures shrink at with affright,
The hard inhabitant contends is right.
Virtuous and vicious ev'ry Man must be,
Few in th' extreme, but all in the degree;
The rogue and fool by fits is fair and wise;
And ev'n the best, by fits, what they despise.

COMMENTARY.

Ver. 231. *Virtuous and vicious ev'ry Man must be,*] There is yet a third cause of this error of *no Vice, no Virtue*, composed of the other two, *i. e.* partly *speculative*, and partly *practical*. And this also the poet considers (from ver. 230 to 239.) shewing it ariseth from the imperfection of the best characters, and the inequality of all; whence it happens that no man is extremely virtuous or vicious, nor extremely constant in the pursuit of either. Why it so happens, the poet informs us, who with admirable sagacity assigns the cause in this line:

"For, Vice or Virtue, SELF directs it still."

An adherence or regard to what is, in the sense of the world, a man's own interest, making an extreme, in either, almost impossible. Its effect in keeping a good man from the extreme of Virtue, needs no explanation; and, in an ill man, self-interest shewing him the necessity of some kind of reputation, the procuring and preserving that, will necessarily keep him from the extreme of Vice.

NOTES.

Ver. 231. *Virtuous and vicious*] A fine and just reflection, and well calculated to subdue and extinguish that petulant contempt and unmerited aversion which men too generally entertain of each other, and which gradually diminish and destroy the social and kind affections. "Our emulation," says the amiable and sagacious Hutcheson, "our jealousy or envy, should be restrained in a great measure by a constant resolution of bearing always in our minds the lovely side of every character." And Plato observes, in the Phædon, that there is something amiable in almost every man living. *Warton.*

Ver. 234. *by fits, what they despise.*] Χαλεπον ισθλον ἔμμεναι, was a saying of Pittacus, quoted and commented upon by Plato, in the Protagoras. *Warton.*

'Tis but by parts we follow good or ill;
For, Vice or Virtue, Self directs it still;
Each individual seeks a several goal;
But HEAV'N's great view is One, and that the Whole.
That counter-works each folly and caprice;
That disappoints th' effect of ev'ry vice;
That, happy frailties to all ranks applied;
Shame to the virgin, to the matron pride,
Fear to the statesman, rashness to the chief,
To kings presumption, and to crowds belief:
That, Virtue's ends from Vanity can raise,
Which seeks no interest, no reward but praise,
And build on wants, and on defects of mind,
The joy, the peace, the glory of Mankind.
Heav'n forming each on other to depend,
A master, or a servant, or a friend,

COMMENTARY.

Ver. 239. *That counter-works each folly and caprice;*] The mention of this principle, that *Self* directs vice and virtue, and its consequence, which is, that

"Each individual seeks a several goal,"

leads the author to observe,

"That HEAV'N's great view is One, and that the Whole."

And this brings him naturally round again to his main subject, namely, *God's producing good out of ill*, which he prosecutes from ver. 238 to 249.

Ver. 249. *Heav'n forming each on other to depend,*] I. Hitherto the Poet hath been employed in discoursing of the use of the Passions, with regard to Society at large; and in freeing his doctrine from objections. This is the *first* general division of the subject of this Epistle.

II. He comes now to shew (from ver. 248 to 261.) the use of these Passions, with regard to the more confined circle of our friends, relations, and acquaintance; and this is the *second* general division.

Bids each on other for assistance call,
Till one Man's weakness grows the strength of all.
Wants, frailties, passions, closer still ally
The common interest, or endear the tie.
To these we owe true friendship, love sincere,
Each home-felt joy that life inherits here;
Yet from the same we learn, in its decline,
Those joys, those loves, those interests to resign;
Taught half by Reason, half by mere decay,
To welcome death, and calmly pass away.

COMMENTARY.

Ver. 261. *Whate'er the Passion, &c.*] III. The Poet having thus shewn the use of the Passions in *Society*, and in *Domestic* life, comes, in the last place, (from ver. 260 to the end), to shew their use to the *Individual*, even in their illusions; the imaginary happiness they present, helping to make the real miseries of life less insupportable: and this is his *third* general division:

" —— Opinion gilds with varying rays
Those painted clouds that beautify our days," &c.

" One

NOTES.

Ver. 253. *Wants, frailties, passions, closer still ally*
The common interest, &c.]

As these lines have been misunderstood, I shall give the reader their plain and obvious meaning. To these frailties (says he) we owe all the endearments of private life; yet, when we come to that age, which generally disposes men to think more seriously of the true value of things, and consequently of their provision for a future state, the consideration, that the grounds of those joys, loves, and friendships, are wants, frailties, and passions, proves the best expedient to wean us from the world; a disengagement so friendly to that provision we are now making for another state. The observation is new, and would in any place be extremely beautiful, but has here an infinite grace and propriety, as it so well confirms, by an instance of great moment, the general Thesis, *That God makes Ill, at every step, productive of Good.* *Warburton.*

Whate'er the Passion, knowledge, fame, or pelf,
Not one will change his neighbour with himself.
The learn'd is happy nature to explore,
The fool is happy that he knows no more;

COMMENTARY.

" One prospect lost, another still we gain;
And not a VANITY is giv'n in vain."

Which must needs vastly raise our idea of God's goodness; who hath not only provided more than a counterbalance of *real happiness* to human miseries, but hath even, in his infinite compassion, bestowed on those who were so foolish as not to have made this provision, an *imaginary happiness;* that they may not be quite overborne with the load of human miseries. This is the Poet's great and noble thought; as strong and solid as it is new and ingenious. It teaches, that these illusions are the faults and follies of men, which they wilfully fall into; and thereby deprive themselves of much happiness, and expose themselves to equal misery; but that still, God (according to his universal way of working) graciously turns these faults and follies so far to the advantage of his miserable creatures, as to become, for a time, the solace and support of their distresses:

" —— Tho' Man's a fool, yet God is wise."

NOTES.

Ver. 261. *Whate'er the Passion, &c.*] It was an objection constantly urged by the ancient Epicureans, that Man could not be the creature of a benevolent Being, as he was formed in a state so helpless and infirm. Montaigne took it, and urged it also. They never considered or perceived that this very infirmity and helplessness were the cause and cement of society; that if men had been perfect and self-sufficient, and had stood in no need of each other's assistance, there would have been no occasion for the invention of the arts, and no opportunity for the exertion of the affections. The lines, therefore, in which Lucretius proposes this objection, are as unphilosophical and inconclusive, as they are highly pathetic and poetical:

" Tum porrò puer, ut sævis projectus ab undis
Navita, nudus humi jacet, infans, indigus omni
Vitali auxilio, cùm primùm in luminis oras

Nixibus

The rich is happy in the plenty giv'n, 265
The poor contents him with the care of Heav'n.
See the blind beggar dance, the cripple sing,
The sot a hero, lunatic a king;

NOTES.

Nixibus ex alvo matris natura profudit;
Vagitúque locum lugubri complet, ut æquum est,
Cui tantum in vitâ restet transire malorum."

Lib. v. ver. 223.

There is a passage in the Moralists, which I cannot forbear thinking Pope had in his eye, and which I must not therefore omit, as it serves to illustrate and confirm so many parts of the Essay on Man. I shall therefore give it at length, without apology:

" The young of most other kinds are instantly helpful to themselves, sensible, vigorous, know how to shun danger, and seek their good: a human infant is of all the most weak, helpless, and infirm. And wherefore should it not have been so ordered? Where is the loss in such a species? Or what is Man the worse for that defect, amidst such large supplies? Does not this defect engage him the more strongly to society, and force him to own that he is purposely, and not by accident, made rational and sociable; and can no otherwise increase or subsist than in that social intercourse and community which is his natural state? Is not both conjugal affection, and natural affection to parents, duty to magistrates, love of a common city, community, or country, with the other duties and social parts of life, deduced from hence, and founded in these very wants? What can be happier than such a deficiency, as it is the occasion of so much good? What better, than a want so abundantly made up, and answered by so many enjoyments? Now, if there are still to be found among mankind, such as even, in the midst of these wants, seem not ashamed to affect a right of independency, and deny themselves to be by nature sociable; where would their shame have been had Nature otherwise supplied their wants? What duty or obligation had been ever thought of? What respect or reverence of parents, magistrates, their country, or their kind? Would not their full and self-sufficient state more strongly have determined them to throw off nature, and deny the ends and Author of their creation?"

Warton.

The starving chemist in his golden views
Supremely blest, the poet in his Muse.
See some strange comfort every state attend,
And pride bestow'd on all, a common friend:
See some fit passion every age supply;
Hope travels through, nor quits us when we die.
Behold the child, by nature's kindly law,
Pleas'd with a rattle, tickled with a straw:

NOTES.

Ver. 270. *the poet in his Muse.*] The author having said, that no one could change his own profession or views for those of another, intended to carry his observation still further, and shew that men were unwilling to exchange their own acquirements even for those of the same kind, confessedly larger, and infinitely more eminent, in another.

To this end he wrote,

" What partly pleases, totally will shock:
I question much, if *Toland* would be *Locke.*"

But wanting another proper instance of this truth, he reserved the lines above for some following edition of this Essay; which he did not live to give. *Warburton.*

Ver. 271. *See some strange comfort*] How exquisite is this stanza of an unfinished Ode of Gray!

" Still where rosy Pleasure leads,
See a kindred Grief pursue;
Behind the steps that Misery treads,
Approaching Comfort view:
The hues of Bliss more brightly glow,
Cherish'd by sabler tints of Woe;
And blended form, with artful strife,
The strength and harmony of life." *Warton.*

Ver. 272. *And pride*] From La Rochefoucault, whose words are: " Nature, who so wisely has fitted the organs of our body to make us happy, seems likewise to have bestowed pride on us, on purpose, as it were, to save us the pain of knowing our own imperfections." Maxim 36. *Warton.*

Ver. 274. *Hope travels through, &c.*] Is this hope then no more than

Some livelier plaything gives his youth delight,
A little louder, but as empty quite:
Scarfs, garters, gold, amuse his riper stage,
And beads and pray'r-books are the toys of age:
Pleas'd with this bauble still, as that before,
Till tir'd he sleeps, and life's poor play is o'er.
Meanwhile opinion gilds with varying rays
Those painted clouds that beautify our days;
Each want of happiness by hope supplied,
And each vacuity of sense by pride:

NOTES.

than one of those strange comforts, those delusive pleasures, those sorts of groundless happiness, that constitute the chief enjoyment of the sot, the chemist, the poet, and the lunatic? *Warton.*

Surely a hope that quits us not *when* we die, must be intended by the poet, to be something *more* than those which the critic has above referred to.

Ver. 280. *And beads and pray'r-books are the toys of age:*] A Satire on what is called, in Popery, the *Opus operatum.* As this is a description of the circle of human life returning into itself by a second childhood, the Poet has with great elegance concluded his description with the same image with which he set out—*And life's poor play is o'er.* *Warburton.*

Ver. 280. *the toys of age:*] Exactly what Fontenelle says,

" Il est des hochets pour tout âge."

And Prior,

" Give us playthings for old age."

Yet it is certain that Fontenelle could not have taken this verse from Prior, for he did not understand English, though Prior wrote it more than twenty years before Fontenelle.

De Lisle, whose translation of Virgil's Georgics is so frequently and so unjustly praised by Voltaire, has also translated, but not published, the Essay on Man. Millot has given another, published 1762. *Warton.*

Ver. 286. *And each vacuity of sense by pride:*] An eminent Casuist, *Father Francis Garasse,* in his *Somme Théologique,* has drawn a very charitable conclusion from this principle; which he hath

These build as fast as knowledge can destroy;
In folly's cup still laughs the bubble, joy;
One prospect lost, another still we gain,
And not a vanity is giv'n in vain;
Ev'n mean Self-love becomes, by force divine,
The scale to measure others' wants by thine.
See! and confess, one comfort still must rise;
'Tis this, Though Man's a fool, yet GOD IS WISE.

NOTES.

hath well illustrated: "Selon la Justice (says this equitable Divine), "tout travail honnête doit être recompensé de loüange ou de satisfaction. Quand les bons esprits font un ouvrage excellent, ils sont justement recompensés par les suffrages du public. Quand un pauvre esprit travaille beaucoup, pour faire un mauvais ouvrage, il n'est pas juste ni raisonable, qu'il attende des loüanges publiques; car elles ne lui sont pas dues. Mais afin que ses travaux ne demeurent pas sans recompense, DIEU lui donne une satisfaction personelle, que personne ne lui peut envier sans une injustice plus que barbare; tout ainsi que Dieu, qui est juste, donne de la satisfaction aux grenoüilles de leur chant. Autrement la blâme public, joint à leur mécontentement, seroit suffisant pour les réduire au désespoir." *Warburton.*

The good father has charitably omitted to take into account the *annoyance* produced by the croaking of the frogs, as well as the *irritation* produced by the works of bad authors; to each of whom the hearers and the readers might retort the ancient saying, "It may be sport to you, but it is death to us."

ARGUMENT OF EPISTLE III.

Of the Nature and State of Man with respect to Society.

I. *THE whole Universe one system of Society,* Ver. 7, &c. *Nothing made wholly for* itself, *nor yet wholly for* another, Ver. 27. *The happiness of* Animals *mutual,* Ver. 49. II. Reason *or* Instinct *operate alike to the good of each Individual,* Ver. 79. Reason *or* Instinct *operate also to Society, in all animals,* Ver. 109. III. *How far* Society *carried by Instinct,* Ver. 115. *How much farther by Reason,* Ver. 128. IV. *Of that which is called the* State *of Nature,* Ver. 144. *Reason instructed by Instinct in the Invention of* Arts, Ver. 166; *and in the Forms of* Society, Ver. 176. V. *Origin of Political Societies,* Ver. 196. *Origin of Monarchy,* Ver. 207. *Patriarchal Government,* Ver. 212. VI. *Origin of true Religion and Government, from the same principle, of Love,* Ver. 231, &c. *Origin of Superstition and Tyranny, from the same principle, of Fear,* Ver. 237, &c. *The Influence of Self-love operating to the* social *and* public *Good,* Ver. 266. *Restoration of true Religion and Government on their first principle,* Ver. 285. *Mixed Government,* Ver. 288. *Various Forms of each, and the true end of all,* Ver. 300, &c.

EPISTLE III.

HERE then we rest: "The Universal Cause
"Acts to one end, but acts by various laws."
In all the madness of superfluous health,
The trim of pride, the impudence of wealth,

COMMENTARY.

WE are now come to the third Epistle of the Essay on Man. It having been shewn, in explaining the origin, use, and end of the Passions, in the second Epistle, that Man hath social as well as selfish Passions, that doctrine naturally introduceth the third, which treats of Man as a SOCIAL animal; and connects it with the second, which considered him as an INDIVIDUAL. And as the conclusion from the subject of the first Epistle made the introduction to the second, so here again, the conclusion of the second—

"Ev'n mean Self-love becomes, by force divine,
The scale to measure others' wants by thine,"

maketh the introduction to the third:

"Here then we rest: The Universal Cause
Acts to one end, but acts by various laws."

The reason of *variety* in those laws, which tend to *one* and the same *end*, the good of the Whole *generally*, is, because the good of the Individual is likewise to be provided for; both which together make

NOTES.

Ver. 3. *superfluous health,*] Immoderate labour and immoderate study are equally the impairers of health. They whose station sets them above both, must needs have an abundance of it, which not being employed in the common service, but wasted in luxury and folly, the Poet properly calls a *superfluity*. *Warburton.*

Ver. 4. *impudence of wealth,*] Because *wealth* pretends to be wisdom, wit, learning, honesty, and, in short, all the virtues in their turns. *Warburton.*

VARIATIONS.

Ver. 1.] In several Edit. in 4to.

Learn, Dulness, learn! "The Universal Cause," &c.
Warburton.

Let this great truth be present night and day; 5
But most be present, if we preach or pray.

COMMENTARY.

make up the good of the Whole *universally*. And this is the cause (as the Poet says elsewhere) that

" Each individual seeks a several goal."

But, to prevent our resting there, God hath made each need the assistance of another; and so

" On mutual wants built mutual happiness."

It was necessary to explain the two first lines, the better to see the pertinency and force of what followeth (from ver. 2 to 7.) where the Poet warns such to take notice of this truth, whose circumstances placing them in an imaginary station of Independence, and inducing a real habit of insensibility to *mutual wants* (from which wants general Happiness results), make them but too apt to overlook the true system of things; viz. the men in full *health* and *opulence*. This caution was necessary with respect to Society; but still more necessary with respect to Religion. Therefore he especially recommends the memory of it as well to the Clergy as Laity, when they *preach* or *pray;* because the preacher who doth not consider the First Cause under this view, as a Being consulting the good of the Whole, must needs give a very unworthy idea of him; and the supplicant, who prayeth as one not related to a whole, or indifferent to the happiness of it, will not only pray in vain, but offend his Maker by neglecting the interests of his dispensation.

NOTES.

Ver. 3, 4, 5, 6.] M. Du Resnel, not seeing into the admirable purpose of the caution contained in these four lines, hath quite dropped the most material circumstances contained in the last of them; and, what is worse, for the sake of a foolish antithesis, hath destroyed the whole propriety of the thought in the two first: and so, between both, hath left his author neither sense nor system.

" Dans le sein du bonheur, *ou de l'adversité*."

Now of all men, those in adversity have least need of this caution, as being least apt to forget, *That God consults the good of the whole, and provides for it by procuring mutual happiness by means of mutual wants;* it being seen that such who yet retain the smart of any fresh

Look round our world; behold the chain of Love
Combining all below and all above.
See plastic Nature working to this end,
The single atoms each to other tend,
Attract, attracted to, the next in place
Form'd and impell'd its neighbour to embrace.

COMMENTARY.

Ver. 7. *Look round our world; &c.*] He now introduceth his system of human Sociability (ver. 7, 8.) by shewing it to be the dictate of the Creator; and that Man, in this, did but follow the example of general Nature, which is united in one close system of benevolence.

Ver. 9. *See plastic Nature working to this end,*] This he proveth, *first*, (from ver. 8 to 13.) on the noble theory of attraction, from the economy of the material world; where there is a general conspiracy in all the particles of matter to work for one end; the use, beauty, and harmony of the whole mass.

NOTES.

fresh calamity, are most compassionate to others labouring under distresses, and most prompt and ready to relieve them.

Warburton.

Ver. 9. *See plastic Nature, &c.*] M. Du Resnel mistook this description of the *preservation* of the material Universe, by the quality of attraction, for a description of its *creation*; and so translates it

" *Voi du sein du Chaos* éclater la lumière,
Chaque atome ébranlé courir pour s'embrasser," &c.

This destroys the Poet's fine analogical argument by which he proves, from the circumstance of *mutual attraction* in matter, that man, while he seeks society, and thereby promotes the good of his species, co-operates with God's general dispensation; whereas the circumstance of a *creation* proves nothing but a *Creator*.

Warburton.

Ver. 12. *Form'd and impell'd, &c.*] To make Matter so cohere as to fit it for the uses intended by its Creator, a proper *Configuration* of its insensible parts, is as necessary as that quality so equally and universally conferred upon it, called *Attraction*. To express the first part of this thought, our author says *form'd*; and to express the latter, *impell'd*. *Warburton.*

See Matter next, with various life endued,
Press to one centre still, the general Good.
See dying vegetables life sustain,
See life dissolving vegetate again:

COMMENTARY.

Ver. 13. *See Matter next, &c.*] The *second* argument (from ver. 12 to 27.) is taken from the vegetable and animal world; whose parts serve mutually for the production, support, and sustentation of each other.

But the observation, that God

" Connects each being, greatest with the least;
Made beast in aid of Man, and Man of beast;
All serv'd, all serving"—

awaking again the pride of his impious adversaries, who cannot bear that man should be thought to be *serving* as well as *served*, he takes this occasion again to humble them (from ver. 26 to 49.) by the same kind of argument he had so successfully employed in the first Epistle, and which the comment on that epistle hath considered at large.

NOTES.

Ver. 15. *See dying vegetables*] " Thus, in the several terrestrial forms, a resignation is required; a sacrifice, and mutual yielding of nature, one to another. The vegetables, by their death, sustain the animals; and the animal bodies dissolved enrich the earth, and raise again the vegetable world. The numerous insects are reduced by the superior kinds of birds or beasts; and these again are checked by man, who, in his turn, submits to other natures, and resigns his form a sacrifice in common to the rest of things." Shaftesbury's Moralist, p. 131.

In a letter of Dr. Warburton, transcribed from the manuscripts of Dr. Birch, in the British Museum, by the late Mr. Maty, are these remarkable words: " As to the passages of Mr. Pope that correspond with Leibnitz, you know he took them from Shaftesbury; and that Shaftesbury and Leibnitz had one common original, Plato, whose system, of the best, when pushed as far as Leibnitz has carried it, must end in Fate." A strange opinion once prevailed, that Leibnitz was not serious in his Theodicée. Le Clerc and De Maiseaux were of this opinion. But Mr. Jourdan, in his entertaining Voyage Literaire, p. 150, has produced a letter of the celebrated

All forms that perish other forms supply,
(By turns we catch the vital breath, and die,)
Like bubbles on the sea of Matter born,
They rise, they break, and to that sea return.
Nothing is foreign; parts relate to whole;
One all-extending, all-preserving Soul
Connects each being, greatest with the least;
Made beast in aid of Man, and Man of beast;
All serv'd, all serving: nothing stands alone;
The chain holds on, and where it ends, unknown.

NOTES.

celebrated and learned Mr. Le Croze, that effectually destroys this absurd supposition. *Warton.*

Ver. 19, 20. *Like bubbles, &c.*] M. Du Resnel translates these two lines thus:

"*Sort du néant, y rentre*, et reparoit au jour."

He is here, indeed, consistently wrong: for having (as we said) mistaken the Poet's account of the *preservation* of *Matter* for the *creation* of it, he commits the very same mistake with regard to the *vegetable* and *animal* systems; and so talks now, though with the latest, of the *production of things out of nothing*. Indeed, by his speaking of their *returning into nothing*, he has subjected his author to M. De Crousaz's censure. "Mr. Pope descends to the most vulgar prejudices, when he tells us that *each being returns to nothing*: the vulgar think that what disappears is annihilated," &c. *Comm. p.* 221. *Warburton.*

Ver. 22. *One all-extending, all-preserving Soul*] Which, in the language of Sir Isaac Newton, is, "Deus omnipræsens est, non per virtutem solam, sed etiam per substantiam: nam virtus sine substantiâ subsistere non potest." *Newt. Princ. Schol. gen. sub fin.* *Warburton.*

Ver. 23. *Connects each being,*]

Spiritus intus alit, magno et se corpore miscet. Virg. *Bowles.*

Ver. 23. *greatest with the least;*] As acting more strongly and immediately in beasts, whose instinct is plainly an external reason; which made an old school-man say, with great elegance, "Deus est anima brutorum:"

"In this 'tis God directs"—— *Warburton.*

Has God, thou fool! work'd solely for thy good,
Thy joy, thy pastime, thy attire, thy food?
Who for thy table feeds the wanton fawn,
For him as kindly spreads the flow'ry lawn.
Is it for thee the lark ascends and sings?
Joy tunes his voice, joy elevates his wings.
Is it for thee the linnet pours his throat?
Loves of his own and raptures swell the note.
The bounding steed you pompously bestride,
Shares with his lord the pleasure and the pride.
Is thine alone the seed that strews the plain?
The birds of Heav'n shall vindicate their grain.
Thine the full harvest of the golden year?
Part pays, and justly, the deserving steer:
The hog, that ploughs not, nor obeys thy call,
Lives on the labours of this Lord of all.
Know, Nature's children all divide her care;
The fur that warms a monarch, warm'd a bear.

NOTES.

Ver. 43. *Know, Nature's children all*] The poetry of these lines is as beautiful as the philosophy is solid. "They who imagine that all things in this world were made for the immediate use of man alone, run themselves into inextricable difficulties. Man, indeed, is the head of this lower part of the creation; and perhaps it was designed to be absolutely under his command. But that all things here tend directly to his own use, is, I think, neither easy nor necessary to be proved. Some manifestly serve for the food and support of others, whose souls may be necessary to prepare and preserve their bodies for that purpose, and may at the same time be happy in a consciousness of their own existence. It is probable they are intended to promote each other's good reciprocally: nay, man himself contributes to the happiness, and betters the condition of the brutes in several respects, by cultivating and improving the ground; by watching the seasons; by protecting and providing

While man exclaims, " See all things for my use!"
" See man for mine!" replies a pamper'd goose: 46
And just as short of reason he must fall,
Who thinks all made for one, not one for all.
Grant that the pow'rful still the weak control;
Be Man the wit and tyrant of the whole: 50

COMMENTARY.

Ver. 49. *Grant that the pow'rful still the weak control;*] However, his adversaries, loth to give up the question, will reason upon the matter; and we are now to suppose them objecting against Providence in this manner.——" We grant," say they, " that in the irrational, as in the inanimate creation, all is *served*, and all is *serving*: but with regard to man, the case is different: he standeth single:

NOTES.

viding for them, when they are unable to protect and provide for themselves." These are the words of Dr. Law, in his learned Commentary on King's Origin of Evil, first published in Latin, 1701, a work of penetration and close reasoning: which, it is remarkable, Bayle had never read, but only some extracts from it, when he first wrote his famous article of the Paulicians, in his Dictionary. *Warton.*

Ver. 45. " *See all things for my use!*"] On the contrary, the wise man hath said, *The Lord hath made all things for himself.* Prov. xvi. 4. *Warburton.*

Ver. 46. *replies a pamper'd goose:*] Taken from Peter Charron: but such a familiar and burlesque image is improperly introduced among such solid and serious reflections. *Warton.*

Ver. 50. *Be Man the wit and tyrant of the whole:*] Alluding to the *witty* system of that Philosopher, which made animals mere machines, insensible of pain or pleasure; and so encouraged Men in the exercise of that *tyranny* over their fellow-creatures, consequent on such a principle. *Warburton.*

VARIATIONS.

After ver. 46. in the former Editions,

What care to tend, to lodge, to cram, to treat him!
All this he knew; but not that 'twas to eat him.
As far as Goose could judge, he reason'd right;
But as to Man, mistook the matter quite. *Warburton.*

Nature that tyrant checks; he only knows,
And helps, another creature's wants and woes.
Say, will the falcon, stooping from above,
Smit with her varying plumage, spare the dove?

COMMENTARY.

single: for his reason hath endowed him both with power and address sufficient to make all things serve him; and his Self-love, of which you have so largely provided for him, will indispose him, in his turn, to serve any: therefore your theory is imperfect." Not so, replies the Poet (from ver. 48 to 79.). I grant that man, indeed, affects to be the wit and tyrant of the whole, and would fain shake off

" that chain of love
Combining all below and all above:"

But Nature, even by the very gift of Reason, checks this tyrant. For Reason endowing man with the ability of setting together the memory of the past with his conjectures about the future; and past misfortunes making him apprehensive of more to come, this disposeth him to pity and relieve others in a state of suffering. And the passion growing habitual, naturally extendeth its effects to all that have a sense of suffering. Now as brutes have neither man's reason, nor his inordinate self-love, to draw them from the system of beneficence; so they wanted not, and therefore have not, this human sympathy of another's misery: by which passion, we see, those qualities, in man, balance one another; and so retain him in that orderly connexion, in which Providence hath placed its whole creation. But this is not all: man's interest and amusement, his vanity and luxury, tie him still closer to the system of beneficence, by obliging him to provide for the support of other animals; and though it be, for the most part, only to devour them with the greater gust, yet this does not abate the proper happiness of the animals so preserved, to whom Providence hath not imparted the *useless knowledge of their end.* From all which it appears, that the theory is yet uniform and perfect.

NOTES.

Ver. 51. *Nature that tyrant checks;*] What an exquisite assemblage is here (down to ver. 70.) of deep reflection, humane sentiments, and poetic imagery! It is finely observed, that compassion is exclusively the property of man alone. *Warton.*

Admires the jay the insect's gilded wings?
Or hears the hawk when Philomela sings?
Man cares for all: to birds he gives his woods,
To beasts his pastures, and to fish his floods;
For some his interest prompts him to provide,
For more his pleasure, yet for more his pride:
All feed on one vain patron, and enjoy
Th' extensive blessing of his luxury.
That very life his learned hunger craves,
He saves from famine, from the savage saves;
Nay, feasts the animal he dooms his feast,
And, till he ends the being, makes it blest;
Which sees no more the stroke, or feels the pain,
Than favour'd Man by touch ethereal slain.
The creature had his feast of life before;
Thou too must perish, when thy feast is o'er!
To each unthinking being, Heav'n a friend,
Gives not the useless knowledge of its end:
To Man imparts it, but with such a view
As, while he dreads it, makes him hope it too:
The hour conceal'd, and so remote the fear,
Death still draws nearer, never seeming near.
Great standing miracle! that Heav'n assign'd
Its only thinking thing this turn of mind.

II. Whether with Reason or with Instinct blest,
Know, all enjoy that pow'r which suits them best;

COMMENTARY.

Ver. 79. *Whether with Reason, &c.*] But even to this as a caviller would still object, we must suppose he does so.——"Admit

NOTES.

Ver. 68. *Than favour'd Man, &c.*] Several of the ancients, and

To bliss alike by that direction tend,
And find the means proportion'd to their end.
Say, where full Instinct is th' unerring guide,
What Pope or Council can they need beside?

COMMENTARY.

mit (says he) that Nature hath endowed all animals, whether human or brutal, with such faculties as admirably fit them to promote the general good: yet, in its care for this, hath not Nature neglected to provide for the private good of the individual? We have cause to think she hath; and we suppose, it was on this exclusive consideration, that she kept back from brutes the gift of Reason (so necessary a means of private happiness), because Reason, as we find in the case of *Man*, where there is occasion for all the complicated contrivance you have described above, to make the effects of his Passions counter-work the immediate powers of his Reason, in order to keep him subservient to the general system; Reason, we say, naturally tendeth to draw Beings into a private independent system." This the Poet answers, by shewing (from ver. 78 to 109.), that the happiness of animal and that of human life are widely different: the happiness of human life consisting in the improvement of the mind, can be procured by Reason only; but the happiness of animal life consisting in the gratifications of sense, is best promoted by Instinct. And, with regard to the regular and constant operation of each, in *that*, Instinct hath plainly the advantage; for here God directs immediately, there only mediately through Man.

NOTES.

and many of the Orientals since, esteemed those who were struck by lightning as sacred persons, and the particular favourites of Heaven. *Pope.*

Ver. 68. *by touch ethereal slain.*] The expression is from Milton. *Warton.*

VARIATIONS.

After ver. 84. in the MS.

While Man, with op'ning views of various ways
Confounded, by the aid of knowledge strays:
Too weak to chuse, yet chusing still in haste,
One moment gives the pleasure and distaste. *Warburton.*

Reason, however able, cool at best,
Cares not for service, or but serves when press'd,
Stays till we call, and then not often near;
But honest Instinct comes a volunteer,
Sure never to o'ershoot, but just to hit;
While still too wide or short is human wit;
Sure by quick Nature happiness to gain,
Which heavier Reason labours at in vain.
This too serves always, Reason never long;
One must go right, the other may go wrong.
See then the acting and comparing pow'rs
One in their nature, which are two in ours;
And Reason raise o'er Instinct as you can,
In this 'tis God directs, in that 'tis Man.

NOTES.

Ver. 97. *And Reason raise o'er Instinct*] Charron, of whom Pope and Bolingbroke were so fond, has treated this subject with so much freedom of thought, and endeavoured to raise Instinct so much above Reason, that Stanhope, his translator, deemed it necessary to obviate the tendency of his tenets, by a long Appendix to the 34th chapter of the first book. It appears a little strange, that so orthodox a divine as Stanhope should translate two books that are supposed to favour libertinism and scepticism —the Wisdom of Charron, and the Maxims of Rochefoucault. Bayle has stated the difficulties that arise in accounting for the actions of brutes, with his usual acuteness and force of argument.

Father Bougeant's little treatise on the Language of Beasts is an amusing work; in which he has placed the notion of Des Cartes, that they are mere machines, in a strong light, as well as the difficulties that arise from the opinion of their having immortal souls. Bougeant was severely censured by his brother Jesuits for this little work. He had better have kept to politics. He wrote the History of the Treaty of Westphalia. Posterity will look on this as a curious work: the state of Europe being now so totally changed, this history will read like a romance. *Warton.*

Who taught the nations of the field and wood
To shun their poison, and to choose their food? 100
Prescient, the tides or tempests to withstand,
Build on the wave, or arch beneath the sand?
Who made the spider parallels design,
Sure as Demoivre, without rule or line?
Who bade the stork, Columbus-like, explore 105
Heavens not his own, and worlds unknown before?
Who calls the council, states the certain day,
Who forms the phalanx, and who points the way?
III. God, in the nature of each being, founds
Its proper bliss, and sets its proper bounds: 110

COMMENTARY.

Ver. 109. *God, in the nature of each being, &c.*] The author now cometh to the main subject of his Epistle, the proof of Man's SOCIABILITY, from the two general Societies composed by him; the *natural*, subject to *paternal* authority; and the *civil*, subject to that of a *magistrate*. This he hath the address to introduce, from what had preceded, in so easy and natural a manner, as sheweth him to have the art of giving all the grace to the dryness and severity of Method, as well as wit to the strength and depth of Reason. The philosophic nature of his work requiring he should shew by what means those Societies were introduced, this affords him an opportunity of sliding gracefully and easily from the preliminaries

NOTES.

Ver. 99. *Who taught*] This passage is highly finished: such objects are more suited to the nature of poetry than abstract ideas. Every verb and epithet has here a descriptive force. We find more imagery from these lines to the end of the Epistle, than in any other parts of this Essay. The origin of the connexions in social life, the account of the state of nature, the rise and effects of superstition and tyranny, and the restoration of true religion and just government; all these ought to be mentioned as passages that deserve high applause, nay, as some of the most exalted pieces of English poetry. *Warton.*

But as he fram'd the whole, the whole to bless,
On mutual wants built mutual happiness:
So from the first, eternal ORDER ran,
And creature link'd to creature, man to man.
Whate'er of life all-quick'ning ether keeps,
Or breathes thro' air, or shoots beneath the deeps,
Or pours profuse on earth, one nature feeds
The vital flame, and swells the genial seeds.
Not man alone, but all that roam the wood,
Or wing the sky, or roll along the flood,
Each loves itself, but not itself alone,
Each sex desires alike, till two are one.
Nor ends the pleasure with the fierce embrace;
They love themselves, a third time, in their race.

COMMENTARY.

minaries into the main subject; and so of giving his work that perfection of method, which we find only in the compositions of great writers. For having just before, though to a different purpose, described the power of bestial Instinct to attain the happiness of the *Individual*, he goeth on, in speaking of Instinct as it is serviceable both to that, and to the *Kind* (from ver. 108 to 147.) to illustrate the original of *Society*. He sheweth, that though, as he had before observed, God had founded the proper bliss of each creature in the nature of its own existence; yet these not being independent individuals, but parts of a Whole, God, to bless that Whole, built mutual happiness on mutual wants. Now, for the supply of mutual wants, creatures must necessarily come together, which is the first ground of Society amongst men. He then proceeds to that called *natural*, subject to *paternal* authority, and arising from the union of the two sexes; describes the imperfect image of it in brutes; then explains it at large in all its causes and effects. And lastly shews, that, as in *fact*, like mere animal Society, it is founded and preserved by mutual wants, the supplial of which causeth mutual happiness; so it is likewise in *right*, as a rational Society, by equity, gratitude, and the observance of the relation of things in general.

Thus beast and bird their common charge attend,
The mothers nurse it, and the sires defend;
The young dismiss'd to wander earth or air,
There stops the Instinct, and there ends the care;
The link dissolves, each seeks a fresh embrace,
Another love succeeds, another race.
A longer care Man's helpless kind demands;
That longer care contracts more lasting bands:
Reflection, Reason, still the ties improve,
At once extend the interest, and the love;
With choice we fix, with sympathy we burn;
Each Virtue in each Passion takes its turn;
And still new needs, new helps, new habits rise,
That graft benevolence on charities.
Still as one brood, and as another rose,
These natural love maintain'd, habitual those:
The last, scarce ripen'd into perfect Man,
Saw helpless him from whom their life began:
Memory and forecast just returns engage,
That pointed back to youth, this on to age;
While pleasure, gratitude, and hope, combin'd,
Still spread the interest, and preserv'd the kind.

IV. Nor think, in NATURE'S STATE they blindly trod;
The State of Nature was the reign of God:

COMMENTARY.

Ver. 147. *Nor think, in* NATURE'S STATE *they blindly trod;*] But the Atheist and Hobbist, against whom Mr. Pope argueth, deny the principle of *Right*, or of natural Justice, before the invention of civil compact; which, they say, gave being to it; and accordingly have had the effrontery publicly to declare, *that a state of Nature was a state of War.* This quite subverteth the Poet's *natural*

Self-love and Social at her birth began,
Union the bond of all things, and of Man. 150
Pride then was not; nor arts, that pride to aid;
Man walk'd with beast, joint tenant of the shade;

COMMENTARY.

natural Society; therefore, after this account of that state, he proceedeth to support the reality of it, by overthrowing the oppugnant principle of *no natural Justice;* which he doth (from ver. 146 to 169.) by shewing, in a fine description of the state of Innocence, as represented in Scripture, that a state of Nature was so far from being without natural Justice, that it was, at first, *the reign of God*, where Right and Truth universally prevailed.

NOTES.

Ver. 152. *Man walk'd with beast, joint tenant of the shade;*] The Poet still takes his imagery from Platonic ideas, for the reason given above. Plato had said, from old tradition, that, during the Golden age, and under the reign of Saturn, the primitive language then in use was common to man and beasts. Moral instructors took advantage of the popular sense of this tradition, to convey their precepts under those fables which gave speech to the whole brute creation. The Naturalists understood the tradition in the contrary sense, to signify, that, in the first ages, Men used inarticulate sounds, like beasts, to express their wants and sensations; and that it was by slow degrees they came to the use of speech. This opinion was afterwards held by Lucretius, Diodorus Sic. and Gregory of Nyss. *Warburton.*

Ver. 152. *Man walk'd with beast,*] Lucretius, agreeably to his more uncomfortable system, has presented us with a different and more horrid picture of this state of Nature. The calamitous condition of Man is exhibited by images of much energy and wildness of fancy; see ver. 980. book v.; and particularly when he represents, at ver. 991. some of these wretched mortals mangled by the wild beasts, into whose caverns they had retreated for shelter in tempestuous seasons, and running distracted with pain through the woods, with their wounds undressed and putrifying:

—— tremulas super ulcera tetra tenentes
Palmas, horriferis accibant vocibus Orcum.

Pain

The same his table, and the same his bed;
No murder clothed him, and no murder fed.
In the same temple, the resounding wood,
All vocal beings hymn'd their equal God:
The shrine with gore unstain'd, with gold undress'd,
Unbrib'd, unbloody, stood the blameless priest:
Heav'n's attribute was Universal Care,
And Man's prerogative to rule, but spare.

NOTES.

Pain is most forcibly expressed by the action here described, and by the epithet "tremulas." *Warton.*

Ver. 156. *All vocal beings, &c.*] This may be well explained by a sublime passage of the Psalmist, who, calling to mind the age of Innocence, and full of the great ideas of those

"Chains of Love
Combining all below and all above,
Which to one point, and to one centre bring,
BEAST, MAN, or ANGEL, *Servant, Lord,* or *King;*"

breaks out into this rapturous and divine apostrophe, to call back the devious Creation to its pristine rectitude; that very state our author describes above: "Praise the Lord, all angels; praise him, all ye hosts. Praise ye him, sun and moon; praise him, all ye stars of light," &c. Psalm cxlviii. *Warburton.*

Ver. 157. *Undress'd, unbrib'd, unbloody,*] Alliteration is here used with effect. But is the assertion consistent with the usual interpretation of the Scripture account of the origin of sacrifice? *Warton.*

Ver. 158. *Unbrib'd, unbloody, &c.*] *i. e.* the state described from ver. 262 to 269. was not yet arrived. For then, when Superstition was become so extreme as to bribe the Gods with *human sacrifices,* Tyranny became necessitated to woo the priest for a favourable answer. *Warburton.*

Ver. 159. *Heav'n's attribute, &c.*] The Poet supposeth the truth of the Scripture account, that Man was created Lord of this inferior world (Ep. i. ver. 230.)

"Subjected these to those, and all to thee."

What

Ah! how unlike the Man of times to come!
Of half that live the butcher and the tomb;
Who, foe to Nature, hears the general groan,
Murders their species, and betrays his own.
But just disease to luxury succeeds,
And ev'ry death its own avenger breeds;

NOTES.

What hath misled some to imagine that our author hath here fallen into a contradiction, was, I suppose, such passages as these, *Ask for what end the heav'nly bodies shine, &c.;* and again, *Has God, thou fool! work'd solely for* thy *good, &c.* But, in truth, this is so far from contradicting what he had said of Man's prerogative, that it greatly confirms it, and the Scripture account concerning it. And because the licentious manner in which this subject has been treated, has made some readers jealous and mistrustful of the author's sober meaning, I shall endeavour to explain it. Scripture says, that Man was made lord of this sublunary world. But intoxicated with Pride, the common effect of sovereignty, he erected himself, like little partial monarchs, into a tyrant. And as tyranny consists in supposing *all* made for the use of *one*, he took those freedoms with *all*, which are the consequence of such a principle. He soon began to consider the whole animal creation as his slaves rather than his subjects: as created for no use of their own, but for his use only; and therefore treated them with the utmost cruelty; and not content, to add insult to his cruelty, he endeavoured to philosophize himself into an opinion that these animals were mere machines, insensible of pain or pleasure. Thus Man affected to be the *Wit* as well as *Tyrant* of the whole. So that it became one who adhered to the Scripture account of Man's dominion to reprove this abuse of it, and to shew that

> " Heav'n's attribute was Universal Care,
> And Man's prerogative to rule, but spare."

Warburton.

Ver. 162. *the butcher and the tomb;*] Plutarch has written a treatise against animal food; tom. ii. 995. Thomson, with his usual tenderness, has done the same; Spring, v. 330. *Warton.*

The fury-passions from that blood began,
And turn'd on Man a fiercer savage, Man.
See him from Nature rising slow to Art!
To copy Instinct then was Reason's part;

COMMENTARY.

Ver. 169. *See him from Nature rising slow to Art!*] Strict method (in which, by this time, the reader finds the Poet to be more conversant, than some were aware of) leads him next to speak of that Society, which succeeded the *Natural*, namely, the *Civil*. He first explains (from ver. 168 to 199.) the intermediate *means* which led Mankind from natural to civil Society. These were the invention and improvement of Arts. For while men lived in a mere state of Nature, there was no need of any other government than the Paternal; but when Arts were found out and improved, then that more perfect form, under the direction of a Magistrate, became necessary. And for these reasons; first, to bring those Arts, already found, to perfection; and, secondly, to secure the product of them to their rightful proprietors. The Poet, therefore, comes now, as we say, to the invention of Arts; but being always intent on the great end for which he wrote his Essay, namely, to mortify that Pride which occasions all the impious complaints against Providence; he speaks of these inventions as only lessons learnt of mere animals guided by Instinct: and thus, at the same time, gives a new instance of the wonderful Providence of God, who hath continued to teach mankind in a way, not only proper to humble human pride, but to raise our idea of divine wisdom to the highest pitch. This he does in a *prosopopœia* the most sublime that ever entered into the human imagination:

Thus then to Man the voice of Nature spake:
"Go, from the Creatures thy instructions take, &c.
And for those Arts mere Instinct could afford,
Be crown'd as Monarchs, or as Gods ador'd."

The delicacy of the Poet's address in the first part of the last line, is very remarkable. In this paragraph he hath given an account of those intermediate means, which led Men from natural to civil Society, that is to say, the invention and improvement of Arts. Now here, on his conclusion of this account, and on his entry upon the description of civil Society itself, he connects the two parts the

Thus then to Man the voice of Nature spake—
" Go, from the Creatures thy instructions take :

COMMENTARY.

the most gracefully that can be conceived, by this true historical circumstance, that it was the invention of *those Arts* which raised to the Magistracy, in this new Society formed for the perfecting of them.

NOTES.

Ver. 171. *Thus then to Man the voice of Nature spake—— Go, &c.*]

M. Du Resnel has translated the lines thus :

" La Nature *indignée* alors se fit entendre ;
Va, *malheureux* mortel, va, lui dit elle, apprendre."

One would wonder what should make the translator represent Nature in such a passion with Man, and calling him names, at a time when Mr. Pope supposed her in her best good-humour. But what led him into this mistake was another as gross. His author having described *the State of innocence* which ends at these lines,

" Heav'n's attribute was Universal Care,
And Man's prerogative to rule, but spare,"

turns from *those* times, to a view of *these latter ages*, and breaks out into this tender and humane complaint,

" Ah ! how unlike the *Man of times to come*,
Of half that live the butcher and the tomb, &c."

Unluckily, M. Du Resnel took this *man of times to come* for the corrupter of that *first age ;* and so imagined the Poet had introduced NATURE only to set things right : he then supposed, of course, she was to be very angry ; and not finding the author had represented her in any great emotion, he was willing to improve upon his original. *Warburton.*

Ver. 171. *The voice of Nature*] The prosopopœia is magnificent, and the occasion important, no less than the origin of the arts of life. Nature is personified by Lucretius, and introduced speaking with suitable majesty and elevation. She is chiding her foolish and ungrateful children for their vain and impious discontent :

" Quid tibi tantopere est, mortalis, quod nimis ægris
Luctibus indulges ? quid mortem congemis, ac fles ?—
Aufer abhinc lacrymas, barathro et compesce querelas."

There is an authoritative air in the brevity of this sentence, as also in

Learn from the birds what food the thickets yield;
Learn from the beasts the physic of the field;

NOTES.

in the concluding line of her speech; and particularly in the very last words:

" Æquo animoque, agedum, jam aliis concede: necesse est."

This fine prosopopœia in our author, is not, as Dr. Warburton asserted, the most sublime that ever entered into the human imagination, for we see Lucretius used it before.

The Romans have left us scarcely any piece of poetry so striking and original as the beginning and progress of Arts, at the end of the fifth book of Lucretius; who perhaps, of all the Roman poets, had the strongest imagination. The Persians distinguish the different degrees of Fancy in different Poets, by calling them Painters or Sculptors. Lucretius, from the force of his images, should be ranked among the latter. He is in truth a Sculptor Poet. His images have a bold relief. Of this noble prosopopœia in Lucretius, Addison seems to have thought in a well-known passage of Cato:

——— " All Nature cries aloud
Thro' all her works."——— *Warton.*

Ver. 173. *Learn from the birds, &c.*] It is a caution commonly practised amongst Navigators, when thrown upon a desert coast, and in want of refreshments, to observe what fruits have been touched by the birds; and to venture on these without further hesitation. *Pope.*

Ver. 173. *Learn from the birds*] Taken, but finely improved, from Bacon's Advancement of Learning, p. 48. " They who discourse of the inventions and originals of things, refer them rather to Beasts, Birds, and Fishes, and Serpents, than to Men. So that it was no marvaile (the manner of antiquity being to consecrate Inventors) that the Egyptians had so few human idols in their temples, but almost all brute. Who taught the raven in a drought to throw pebbles into a hollow tree when she spied water, that the water might rise so as she might come to it? Who taught the bee to sayle thro' such a vast sea of air, and to find the way from a field in flower a great way off to her hive? Who taught the ant to bite every graine of corne she burieth in her hill, least it should take roote and grow?" See, in the Philosophical Transactions, the

Thy arts of building from the bee receive;
Learn of the mole to plough, the worm to weave;
Learn of the little nautilus to sail,
Spread the thin oar, and catch the driving gale.
Here too all forms of social union find,
And hence let Reason, late, instruct Mankind:
Here subterranean works and cities see;
There towns aërial on the waving tree.
Learn each small people's genius, policies,
The ants' republic, and the realm of bees;
How those in common all their wealth bestow,
And anarchy without confusion know;
And these for ever, tho' a monarch reign,
Their separate cells and properties maintain.
Mark what unvaried laws preserve each state,
Laws wise as Nature, and as fix'd as Fate.

NOTES.

the marvellous account of the white ants in Africa, and their buildings and arts.

It is somewhat remarkable, that Solomon, in the Proverbs, when he speaks of the wonderful instincts of certain animals, does not mention the bee. *Warton.*

Ver. 174. *Learn from the beasts, &c.*] See Pliny's *Nat. Hist.* l. viii. c. 27. where several instances are given of animals discovering the medicinal efficacy of herbs, by their own use of them; and pointing out to some operations in the art of healing, by their own practice. *Warburton.*

Ver. 177. *Learn of the little nautilus, &c.*] Oppian Halieut. lib. i. describes this fish in the following manner: "They swim on the surface of the sea, on the back of their shells, which exactly resemble the hulk of a ship; they raise two feet like masts, and extend a membrane between, which serves as a sail; the other two feet they employ as oars at the side. They are usually seen in the Mediterranean." *Pope.*

In vain thy Reason finer webs shall draw,
Entangle justice in her net of law,
And right, too rigid, harden into wrong,
Still for the strong too weak, the weak too strong.
Yet go! and thus o'er all the creatures sway,
Thus let the wiser make the rest obey;
And for those arts mere Instinct could afford,
Be crown'd as Monarchs or as Gods ador'd."
V. Great Nature spoke; observant Men obey'd;
Cities were built, Societies were made:

COMMENTARY.

Ver. 199. *Great Nature spoke;*] After all this necessary preparation, the Poet shews (from ver. 198 to 209.) how civil Society followed, and the advantages it produced.

NOTES.

Ver. 199. *observant Men obey'd*;] The epithet is beautiful, as signifying both obedience to the voice of Nature, and attention to the lessons of the animal creation. But M. l'Abbé, who has a strange fatality of contradicting his original, whenever he attempts *to paraphrase* (as he calls it) the sense, turns the lines in this manner:

" Par ces mots la nature excita l'industrie,
Et de l'Homme feroce enchaina la furie."

Chained up the fury of savage Man; and so contradicts the author's whole system of benevolence, and goes over to the Atheist's, who

VARIATIONS.

Ver. 197.] In the first Editions,

Who for those Arts they learn'd of BRUTES before,
As Kings shall crown them, or as GODS adore.

" Les sauvages racontent que ce fut *Michabou* (le DIEU des Eaux] qui apprit à leurs ancêtres à pêcher; qu'il inventa les rêts, et que ce fut la toile d'ARAIGNEE, qui lui en donna l'idée."—*Journal d'un Voyage dans l'Amerique Sept. par Charlevoix.* Vol. v. p. 417. *Par.* 1744. 8vo. *Warburton.*

Here rose one little state; another near
Grew by like means, and join'd thro' love or fear.
Did here the trees with ruddier burthens bend,
And there the streams in purer rills descend?
What war could ravish, commerce could bestow,
And he return'd a friend, who came a foe.
Converse and love mankind may strongly draw,
When love was liberty, and nature law.

NOTES.

who supposes *the state of nature to be a state of war*. What seems to have misled him was these lines:

" What war could ravish, commerce could bestow,
And he return'd a friend who came a foe."

But M. du Resnel should have considered, that though the author holds *a state of nature to be a state of peace*, yet he never imagined it impossible that there should be quarrels in it. He had said,

" So drives self-love through just and through unjust."

He pushes no system to an extravagance, but *steers* (as he says in his preface) *through doctrines seemingly opposite*, or, in other words, follows truth uniformly throughout. *Warburton.*

Ver. 208. *When love was liberty,*]

Where love is liberty, and nature law."

Eloisa to Abelard. *Bowles.*

VARIATIONS.

Ver. 201. *Here rose one little state, &c.*] In the MS. thus:

The neighbours leagued to guard their common spot;
And love was nature's dictate; murder, not.
For want alone each animal contends;
Tigers with tigers, that remov'd, are friends;
Plain nature's wants the common mother crown'd,
She pour'd her acorns, herbs, and streams around.
No treasure then for rapine to invade;
What need to fight for sun-shine, or for shade?
And half the cause of contest was remov'd,
When beauty could be kind to all who lov'd. *Warburton.*

Thus States were form'd; the name of King unknown,
Till common interest plac'd the sway in one.
'Twas VIRTUE ONLY (or in arts or arms,
Diffusing blessings, or averting harms)

COMMENTARY.

Ver. 209. *Thus States were form'd;*] Having thus explained the original of Civil Society, he shews us next (from ver. 206 to 215.) that to this Society a *civil magistrate*, properly so called, did belong. And this in confutation of that idle hypothesis, which pretends that God conferred the regal title on the Fathers of families; from whence men, when they had instituted Society, were to fetch their Governors. On the contrary, our author shews, that a King was unknown, till common interest, which led men to institute civil government, led them at the same time to institute a Governor. However, that it is true that the same wisdom or valour, which gained regal obedience from sons to the sire, procured kings a paternal authority, and made them considered as fathers of their people; which probably was the original (and, while mistaken, continues to be the chief support) of that slavish error; Antiquity representing its earliest monarchs under the idea of a common father, πατὴρ ἀνδρῶν. Afterwards, indeed, they became a kind of foster-fathers, ποιμένα λαῶν, as Homer calls one of them; till at length they began to devour that flock they had been so long accustomed to shear; and, as Plutarch says of Cecrops, ἐκ χρηστοῦ βασιλέως ἄγριον καὶ δρακοντώδη γινόμενον TYRANNON.

NOTES.

Ver. 208. *When love was liberty,*] *i. e.* When men had no need to guard their native liberty from their governors by civil pactions; the love which each master of a family had for those under his care being their best security. *Warburton.*

Ver. 211. *'Twas Virtue only, &c.*] Our author hath good authority for this account of the origin of kingship. Aristotle assures us, that it was Virtue only, or in arts or arms: Καθίσταται Βασιλεὺς ἐκ τῶν ἐπιεικῶν καθ' ὑπεροχὴν ἀρετῆς, ἢ πράξεως τῶν ἀπὸ τῆς ἀρετῆς, ἢ καθ' ὑπεροχὴν τοιούτου γένους. *Warburton.*

The same which in a sire the sons obey'd,
A Prince the father of a people made.

VI. Till then, by Nature crown'd, each patriarch sate,
King, priest, and parent of his growing state;

COMMENTARY.

Ver. 215. *Till then, by Nature crown'd, &c.*] The Poet now returns (at ver. 215 to 241.) to what he had left unfinished in his description of natural Society. This, which appears irregular, is, indeed, a fine instance of his thorough knowledge of method. I will explain it:

This third epistle, we see, considers Man with respect to SOCIETY; the second, with respect to HIMSELF; and the fourth, with respect to HAPPINESS. But in none of these relations does the Poet ever lose sight of him under that in which he stands to GOD. It will follow, therefore, that speaking of him with respect to *Society*, the account would be most imperfect, were he not at the same time considered with respect to his *Religion;* for between these two, there is a close, and, while things continue in order, a most interesting connexion:

"True FAITH, true POLICY united ran;
That was but love of God, and this of Man."

Now Religion suffering no change or depravation when Man first entered into civil Society, but continuing the same as in the state of Nature; the author, to avoid repetition, and to bring the account of *true* and *false* Religion nearer to one another, in order to contrast them by the advantage of that situation, deferred giving an account of his *Religion* till he had spoken of the origin of civil Society.

NOTES.

Ver. 214. *A Prince the father*] Joinville relates, that he had frequently seen St. Louis, after having heard mass in the summer, seat himself at the foot of an old oak in the forest of Vincennes, where any one of his subjects might approach him, and lay his business or complaint before this good king. Our author would have much improved all that he says of Government, if he had lived to have read one of the best, perhaps, of all treatises on politics, that of the President Montesquieu. *Warton.*

On him, their second Providence, they hung,
Their law his eye, their oracle his tongue.
He from the wond'ring furrow call'd the food,
Taught to command the fire, control the flood,
Draw forth the monsters of th' abyss profound,
Or fetch the aërial eagle to the ground.

COMMENTARY.

Society. Thence it is, that he here resumes the account of the state of Nature, that is, so much of it as he had left untouched, which was only the *Religion* of it. This consisting in the knowledge of the one God, the Creator of all things, he shews how Men came by that knowledge: That it was either found out by REASON, which giving to every effect a cause, instructed them to go from cause to cause, till they came to the first, who, being causeless, would necessarily be judged self-existent; or else that it was taught by TRADITION, which preserved the memory of the Creation. He then tells us *what* these men, undebauched by false science, understood by God's nature and attributes: First, of God's *Nature*, that they easily distinguished between the Worker and the Work; saw the substance of the Creator to be distinct and different from that of the Creature, and so were in no danger of falling into the horrid opinion of the Greek philosophers, and their follower, Spinoza. And simple Reason teaching them that the Creator was but One, they easily saw that ALL WAS RIGHT, and so were in as little danger of falling into the Manichean error; which, when *oblique Wit* had broken the *steady light of Reason*, imagined all was not right, having before imagined that all was not the work of One. Secondly, he shews, what they understood of God's *Attributes;* that they easily acknowledged a Father where they found a Deity; and could not conceive a sovereign Being to be any other than a sovereign Good.

NOTES.

Ver. 219. *He from the wond'ring*] A finer example can perhaps scarcely be given of a compact and comprehensive style. The manner in which the four elements were subdued is comprised in these four lines alone. Pope is here, as Quintilian says of another, " densus et brevis, et instans sibi." There is not an useless word in this passage; there are but three epithets, *wondering*, *profound*, *aërial;*

Till drooping, sick'ning, dying, they began
Whom they rever'd as God to mourn as Man:
Then, looking up from sire to sire, explor'd
One great first father, and that first ador'd.

NOTES.

aërial; and they are placed precisely with the very substantive that is of most consequence: if there had been epithets joined with the other substantives, it would have weakened the *nervousness* of the *sentence.* This was a secret of versification Pope well understood, and hath often practised with peculiar success. *Warton.*

Ver. 225. *Then, looking up, &c.*] The Poet here maketh their more serious attention to Religion to have arisen, not from their gratitude amidst abundance, but from their inability in distress; by shewing, that, in prosperity, they rested in *second causes,* the immediate authors of their blessings, *whom they revered as God;* but that, in adversity, they reasoned up to the *First:*

" Then, looking up from sire to sire," &c.

This, I am afraid, is but too true a representation of humanity. *Warburton.*

Ver. 225 to Ver. 240.] M. Du Resnel, not apprehending that the Poet was here returned to finish his description of the State of Nature, has fallen into one of the grossest errors that ever was committed. He has mistaken this account of *true Religion* for an account of the *origin of Idolatry;* and thus he fatally embellishes his own blunder:

" Jaloux d'en conserver les traits et la figure,
Leur zèle industrieux inventa la peinture.
Leurs neveux, attentifs à ces hommes fameux,
Qui par le droit du sang avoient régné sur eux,
Trouvent-ils dans leur suite *un grand, un premier père,*
Leur aveugle respect l'adore et le révère."

Here you have one of the finest pieces of reasoning turned at once into a heap of nonsense. The unlucky term of *Great first Father,* was mistaken by our translator to signify a *Great Grandfather.* But he should have considered, that Mr. Pope always represents God under the idea of a FATHER. He should have observed, that the Poet is here describing those men who

" To *Virtue,* in the paths of pleasure trod,
And own'd a *Father,* where they own'd a *God!*" *Warburton.*

Or plain tradition that this All begun,
Convey'd unbroken faith from sire to son;
The worker from the work distinct was known,
And simple Reason never sought but one:
Ere Wit oblique had broke that steady light,
Man, like his Maker, saw that all was right;

NOTES.

Ver. 227. *that this All begun,*]

"Some few, whose lamp shone brighter, have been led
From cause to cause, to Nature's secret head;
And found that one first Principle must be:
But what, or who, that Universal He;
Whether some soul encompassing this ball
Unmade, unmov'd; yet making, moving All;
Or various atoms interfering dance,
Leapt into form (the noble work of Chance);
Or this great All was from eternity;
Not e'en the Stagirite himself could see;
And Epicurus guess'd as well as he:
As blindly grop'd they for a future state;
As rashly judg'd of Providence and Fate.
Thus anxious thoughts in endless circles roll,
Without a centre where to fix the soul:
In this wild maze their vain endeavours end;
How can the less the greater comprehend?
Or finite Reason reach infinity?
For what could fathom God were more than He."

This passage is from the *Religio Laici* of Dryden. It is a pleasing and useful amusement to compare the didactic style of Pope with that of his master, and see which of them has the art of reasoning best in verse. *Warton.*

Ver. 231. *Ere Wit oblique, &c.*] A beautiful allusion to the effects of the prismatic glass on the rays of light. *Warburton.*

Ver. 232. *Man, like his Maker, &c.*] It was before the Fall of Man, as the sacred Historian tells us, that God pronounced That all was good. But we must bear in mind that our author never

To Virtue, in the paths of pleasure trod,
And own'd a Father when he own'd a God.
Love all the faith, and all th' allegiance then;
For Nature knew no right divine in Men,
No ill could fear in God; and understood
A sov'reign being but a sov'reign good.
True faith, true policy, united ran,
That was but love of God, and this of Man.
Who first taught souls enslav'd, and realms undone,
Th' enormous faith of many made for one;

COMMENTARY.

Ver. 241. *Who first taught souls enslav'd, &c.*] Order leadeth the Poet to speak (from ver. 240 to 245.) of the corruption of *civil*

NOTES.

never adverts to, or argues from, or supposes, any lapsed condition of Man. *Warton.*

Ver. 241. *Who first taught*] "What flatterers of princes often tell us, that monarchy was the earliest form, is rather dishonourable to it; importing, indeed, that it at first pleased a rude and unexperienced populace, but could not continue to please upon experience and the increase of wisdom. And indeed in nothing could one less expect that the first essays could be perfect, than in a constitution of civil policy; a work requiring the greatest knowledge and prudence, to be acquired only by much thought and experience of human life. The several great inconveniences attending each of the simple forms, shew the necessity of having recourse to the mixed and complex; and the several great advantages peculiar to each of the simple, shew that those mixed forms are best where all the three kinds are artfully compounded: and this was the opinion of the wisest men of antiquity—Plato, Aristotle, Zeno, Cicero."

These are the words of that most amiable and candid philosopher, Hutcheson. *Warton.*

Ver. 242. *Th' enormous faith, &c.*] In this Aristotle placeth the

That proud exception to all Nature's laws,
T' invert the work, and counter-work its Cause?
Force first made conquest, and that conquest, law;
Till Superstition taught the tyrant awe, 246

COMMENTARY.

civil Society into *Tyranny*, and its causes; and here, with all the dexterity of address, as well as force of truth, he observes it arose from the violation of that great Principle, which he so much insists upon throughout his Essay, *that each was made for the use of all.* We may be sure, that in this corruption, where right or natural justice was cast aside, and *violence*, the Atheist's justice, presided in its stead, *Religion* would follow the fate of civil Society. We know, from ancient history, it did so. Accordingly Mr. Pope (from ver. 244 to 269.) together with corrupt Politics, describes corrupt Religion and its causes: he first informs us, agreeable to his exact knowledge of antiquity, that it was the Politician, and not the Priest (as the illiterate tribe of Freethinkers would make us believe), who first corrupted Religion. Secondly, That the Superstition he brought in was not invented by him, as an engine to play upon others (as the dreaming Atheist feigns, who would thus account for the origin of Religion), but was a trap he first fell into himself.

" Superstition taught the tyrant awe."

NOTES.

the difference between a King and a Tyrant, that the first supposeth himself made for the People; the other, that the People are made for him: Βούλεται δ' ὁ ΒΑΣΙΛΕΥΣ εἶναι φυλαξ, ὅ πως οἱ μὲν πλείημένοι τὰς ὐσίας μηθὲν ἄδικον πάσχωσιν, ὁ δὲ δημος μὴ ὑβρίζηται μηθέν· ἡ δὲ ΤΥΡΑΝΝΙΣ πρὸς ὐδὲν ἀποβλέπει κοινὸν, εἰ μὴ τῆς ἰδίας ὠφελείας χάριν. Pol. lib. v. cap. 10. *Warburton.*

Ver. 245. *Force first made conquest, &c.*] All this is agreeable to fact, and shews our author's knowledge of human nature. For that *Impotency* of mind (as the Latin writers call it), which gives birth to the enormous crimes necessary to support a Tyranny, naturally subjects its owner to all the vain, as well as real, terrors of conscience. Hence the whole machinery of SUPERSTITION.

It is true, the Poet observes, that afterwards, when the Tyrant's

Then shar'd the tyranny, then lent it aid,
And Gods of conquerors, slaves of subjects made:

NOTES.

rant's fright was over, he had cunning enough, from the experience of the effect of Superstition upon himself, to turn it, by the assistance of the Priest (who for his reward went shares with him in the Tyranny) against the justly dreaded resentment of his subjects. For a tyrant naturally and reasonably supposeth all his slaves to be his enemies.

Having given the Causes of Superstition, he next describeth its objects:

" Gods partial, changeful, passionate, unjust," &c.

The ancient Pagan Gods are here very exactly described. This fact evinces the truth of that original, which the Poet gives to Superstition; for if these phantasms were first raised in the imagination of Tyrants, they must needs have the qualities here assigned to them. For force being the Tyrant's virtue, and luxury his happiness, the attributes of his God would of course be *Revenge* and *Lust;* in a word, the antitype of himself. But there was another, and more substantial cause, of the resemblance between a Tyrant and a Pagan God; and that was the making *Gods of Conquerors*, as the Poet says; and so canonizing a Tyrant's vices with his person. *Warburton.*

Ver. 246. *Till Superstition taught*] Notwithstanding these verses are so spirited and splendid, yet are they excelled by the sublime and terrific figure painted by Lucretius with such force and energy, that Michael Angelo might have worked from the sketch of the gigantic demon of superstition, putting out his head from the heavens, and looking down with a horrible aspect on the miserable and trembling sons of men.

" Quæ caput à cœli regionibus ostendebat,
Horribili super aspectû mortalibus instans!" *Warton.*

The passages in Lucretius and Pope admit not of comparison; the former is no more characteristic of *Superstition* than of any other horrible spectre which may be supposed to look out from the heavens to terrify mankind; whilst that of Pope, carried on for upwards of twenty lines of insurpassable energy, exhibits Superstition in her different phases and effects, each more terrific than the other, till we shudder at the various changes she successively

She 'midst the lightning's blaze, and thunder's sound,
When rock'd the mountains, and when groan'd the ground,
She taught the weak to bend, the proud to pray,
To Pow'r unseen, and mightier far than they:
She, from the rending earth and bursting skies,
Saw Gods descend, and fiends infernal rise:
Here fix'd the dreadful, there the blest abodes;
Fear made her devils, and weak hope her Gods;
Gods partial, changeful, passionate, unjust,
Whose attributes were rage, revenge, or lust;
Such as the souls of cowards might conceive,
And, form'd like tyrants, tyrants would believe.

NOTES.

sively assumes; changes not the less striking because they cannot be embodied by the painter, whose limited art can only animate visible form, and can give us no idea of the rending earth and bursting skies. As an example of terror and sublimity this passage is not exceeded, if equalled, by those from Milton which Mr. Bowles has given in a subsequent note.

Ver. 257. *Gods partial, changeful,*] "It were better," says Bacon, in his 17th Essay, "to have no opinion of God at all, than such an opinion as is unworthy of Him; for the one is unbelief, the other is contumely: and certainly Superstition is the reproach of the Deity. And as the contumely is greater towards God, so the danger is greater towards men. Atheism leaves a man to sense, to philosophy, to natural piety, to laws, to reputation; all which may be guides to an outward moral virtue, though religion were not: but Superstition dismounts all these, and erecteth an absolute monarchy in the minds of men. Therefore Atheism did never perturb states; for it makes men wary of themselves, as looking no farther."

It is extremely remarkable, that this last paragraph comprehends all that Bayle has said of the effects of Atheism in his celebrated Thoughts on Comets. And yet Bacon has never been censured for it, nor numbered among Infidels. *Warton.*

Zeal then, not charity, became the guide;
And hell was built on spite, and heav'n on pride.
Then sacred seem'd th' ethereal vault no more;
Altars grew marble then, and reek'd with gore:
Then first the Flamen tasted living food;
Next his grim idol smear'd with human blood;
With heav'n's own thunders shook the world below,
And play'd the God an engine on his foe.

NOTES.

Ver. 262. *and heaven on pride.*] This might be very well said of those times when no one was content to go to Heaven without being received there on the footing of a God, with the ceremony of an Αποθεωσις. *Warburton.*

Ver. 262. *And hell was built on spite,*] How mortifying is it to consider, says one, that Locke, Newton, and Clarke would have been persecuted in France, imprisoned at Rome, and burnt at Lisbon? *Warton.*

Ver. 265. *Then first the Flamen*] With what imagination, and genuine strokes of poetry, are the idols and fearful rites of ancient Superstition described, in Milton's Hymn on the Nativity!

" In urns and altars round,
A drear and dying sound
Affrights the *Flamens*, at their service quaint."

" And *sullen* Moloch *fled*,
Hath left, in *shadows* dread,
His burning idol, all of blackest hue;
In vain, with *cymbal's* ring
They call the *grisly King*,
In *dismal dance* about the furnace blue." *Bowles.*

Ver. 266. *Next his grim idol*] From Milton's description of Moloch:

" First Moloch, horrid king, *besmear'd with blood*
Of human sacrifice, and parents' tears,
Tho' for the noise of drums and timbrels loud,
Their children's cries unheard, that pass'd thro' fire
To his *grim* idol."

It has not been remarked, as Mr. Todd observed to me, how many

So drives Self-love, through just and through unjust,
To one Man's pow'r, ambition, lucre, lust: 270
The same Self-love, in all, becomes the cause
Of what restrains him, Government and Laws.

COMMENTARY.

Ver. 269. *So drives Self-love, &c.*] The inference our author draws from all this (from ver. 268 to 283.) is, that SELF-LOVE driveth through right and wrong; it causeth the Tyrant to violate the rights of mankind; and it causeth the people to vindicate that violation. For Self-love being common to the whole species, and setting each individual in pursuit of the same objects, it became necessary for each, if he would secure his own, to provide for the safety of another's. And thus Equity and Benevolence arose from that same Self-love which had given birth to Avarice and Injustice:

" His Safety must his Liberty restrain;
All join to guard what each desires to gain."

The Poet hath not anywhere shewn greater address, in the disposition of this work, than with regard to the inference before us; which not only giveth a proper and timely support to what had been advanced in the second Epistle concerning the nature and effects of Self-love, but is a necessary introduction to what follows, concerning the reformation of Religion and Society; as we shall see presently.

NOTES.

many expressions Pope takes from Milton, whom, in his Imitations of English Poets, he omits,—possibly on this account. Many of his writings are *strewed* with Miltonic phrases, though they need not be pointed out, and certainly do not detract from his general merit. Such *interweavings* of significant and forcible expressions have often a striking effect. *Bowles.*

Ver. 272. *Government and Laws.*] " However men might submit voluntarily, in the simplicity of early ages, or be subjected by conquest to a government without a constitution; yet they were never long in discovering," in the words of Hooker, " that to live by one man's will, became the cause of all men's misery; and therefore they soon rejected the yoke, or made it sit easy on their necks." *Warton.*

For, what one likes if others like as well,
What serves one will, when many wills rebel?
How shall we keep, what, sleeping or awake,
A weaker may surprise, a stronger take?
His safety must his liberty restrain:
All join to guard what each desires to gain.
Forc'd into virtue thus by self-defence,
Ev'n Kings learn'd justice and benevolence:
Self-love forsook the path it first pursued,
And found the private in the public good.
'Twas then, the studious head, or generous mind,
Follower of God, or friend of human-kind,

COMMENTARY.

Ver. 283. *'Twas then, the studious head, &c.*] The Poet hath now described the rise, perfection, and decay of civil Policy and Religion in the more early times. But the design had been imperfect, had he dropt his discourse here. There was, in after-ages, a recovery of these from their several corruptions. Accordingly, he hath chosen that happy æra for the conclusion of his Song. But

NOTES.

Ver. 273. *For, what one likes*] These two lines express with brevity and clearness the following sentiments of Hooker: "The like natural inducement hath brought men to know, that it is no less their duty to love others than themselves; for seeing those things which are equal must needs all have one measure, if I cannot but wish to receive good, even as much at every man's hands as any man can wish unto his own soul, how should I look to have any part of my desire herein satisfied, unless myself be careful to satisfy the like desire which is undoubtedly in other men?"

Warton.

Ver. 283. *'Twas then, the studious head, &c.*] The Poet seemeth here to mean the polite and flourishing age of Greece; and those benefactors to Mankind, which he had principally in view, were SOCRATES and ARISTOTLE; who, of all the Pagan world, spoke best of God, and wrote best of Government. *Warburton.*

POET or PATRIOT, rose but to restore
The Faith and Moral, Nature gave before;
Relum'd her ancient light, not kindled new;
If not God's image, yet his shadow drew:
Taught Pow'r's due use to people and to kings,
Taught nor to slack, nor strain its tender strings;
The less, or greater, set so justly true,
That touching one must strike the other too;
Till jarring interests, of themselves create
Th'according music of a well-mix'd State.

COMMENTARY.

But as good and ill Governments and Religions succeed one another without ceasing, he now leaveth facts, and turneth his discourse (from ver. 282 to 295) to speak of a more lasting reform of mankind, in the invention of those philosophic Principles, by whose observance a Policy and a Religion may be for ever kept from sinking into Tyranny and Superstition:

" 'Twas then, the studious head, or generous mind,
Follower of God, or friend of human kind,
Poet or Patriot, rose but to restore
The Faith and Moral, Nature gave before;" *&c.*

The easy and just transition into this subject from the foregoing is admirable. In the foregoing he had described the effects of Self-love; and now, with great art and high probability, he maketh Men's *observations* on these effects the occasion of those discoveries which they have made of the true principles of Policy and Religion, described in the present paragraph; and this he evidently hinteth at in that fine transition:

" 'Twas THEN, the studious head, &c.

NOTES.

Ver. 294. *Th' according music*] This is the very same illustration that Tully uses in that beautiful fragment, De Republicâ: " Ut in fidibus, ac tibiis, atque cantu ipso, ac vocibus, concentus est quidam tenendus ex distinctis tonis, quem immutatum, ac discrepantem aures eruditæ ferre non possunt, isque concentus ex dissimillarum vocum moderatione concors tamen efficitur et congruens;

Such is the world's great harmony, that springs
From Order, Union, full Consent of things; 296

COMMENTARY.

Ver. 295. *Such is the world's great harmony, &c.*] Having thus described the true principles of civil and ecclesiastical Policy, he proceedeth (from ver. 294 to 303) to illustrate the harmony between the two Policies, by the universal harmony of Nature:

" Such is the world's great harmony, that springs
From Order, Union, full Consent of things."

Thus, as in the beginning of this Epistle he supported the *general* principle of mutual Love or Association, by considerations drawn from the particular properties of Matter, and the mutual dependence between vegetable and animal life; so, in the conclusion, he hath enforced the *particular* principles of Civil and Religious Society, from that *general* harmony, which springs, in part, from those properties and dependencies.

NOTES.

gruens; sic, ex summis et infimis, et mediis interjectis ordinibus, ut tonis, moderatâ ratione civitas consensu dissimili morum concinit, et quæ harmonia a musicis dicitur in cantu, ea est in civitate concordia, arctissimum atque optimum omni in Republicâ vinculum incolumitatis; quæ sine justitiâ, nullo pacto esse potest."

Such is the happy and inestimable constitution of Great Britain! Let those, who talk and think of absolute equality, remember the words of one whom they must allow was a lover of freedom:

——" And if not equal all, yet free,
Equally free; for orders and degrees
Jar not with liberty, but well consist."

Par. Lost, Book V. v. 791.

Thucydides, in three words, describes a just and well-poised government, which ought to be, ἀντόνομον, ἀντόδικον, ἀντότιλῆ.

Warton.

Ver. 295. *Such is the world's great harmony, &c.*] A harmony very different from the PRE-ESTABLISHED HARMONY of the celebrated Leibnitz, which introduceth a Fatality destructive of all Religion and Morality. Yet hath the learned M. de Crousaz ventured to accuse our Poet of espousing that dangerous whimsy,

The

Where small and great, where weak and mighty, made
To serve, not suffer, strengthen, not invade;

NOTES.

The *pre-established harmony* was built upon, and is an outrageous extension of a conception of Plato; who combating the atheistical objections about the *origin of Evil*, employs this argument in defence of Providence: "That amongst an infinite number of possible worlds in God's idea, this which he hath created and brought into being, and which admits of a mixture of Evil, is the best. But if the best, then Evil consequently is partial, comparatively small, and tendeth to the greater perfection of the whole." This principle is espoused and supported by Mr. Pope with all the power of reason and poetry. But neither was Plato a Fatalist, nor is there any fatalism in the argument. As to the truth of the notion, that is another question; and how far it cleareth up the very difficult controversy about the origin of Evil, is still another. That it is a full solution of the difficulty, I cannot think, for reasons too long to be given in this place. Perhaps we shall never have a full solution here, and it may be no great matter though we have not, as we are demonstrably certain of the moral attributes of the Deity. Yet this will never hinder writers from exposing themselves on this subject. A late author thinks he can account for the *Origin of Evil*, and therefore he will write: he thinks too, that the clearing up this difficulty is necessary to secure the foundation of religion, and therefore he will print. But he is doubly mistaken: he must know little of Philosophy to fancy that he has found the solution; and still less of Religion, to imagine that the want of his solution can affect our belief in God. Such writers

"*Amuse th' unlearn'd, and make the learned smile.*"

However, Mr. Pope may be justified in receiving and enforcing this Platonic notion, as it hath been adopted by the most celebrated and orthodox divines both of the ancient and modern church.

This doctrine was taken up by Leibnitz; but it was to ingraft upon it a most pernicious fatalism. Plato said, God *chose* the best: Leibnitz said, he *could not but* choose the best, as he could not act without, what this philosopher called, a *sufficient reason*.

Plato

More pow'rful each as needful to the rest,
And, in proportion as it blesses, blest; 300

NOTES.

Plato supposed freedom in God to choose one of two things equally good: Leibnitz held the supposition to be absurd: however, admitting the case, he still held that God could *not* choose one of two things equally good. Thus it appears, the first went on the system of Freedom; and that the latter, notwithstanding the most artful disguises of his principles, in his *Theodicée*, was a thorough Fatalist: for we cannot well suppose he would give that freedom to Man which he had taken away from God. The truth of the matter seems to be this: he saw, on the one hand, the monstrous absurdity of supposing, with Spinoza, that blind Fate was the author of a coherent Universe; but yet, on the other, he could not conceive with Plato, how God could foresee and conduct, according to an archetypal idea, a World, of all possible Worlds the best, inhabited by *free Agents*. This difficulty, therefore, which made the Socinians take Prescience from God, disposed Leibnitz to take Free-will from Man: and thus he fashioned his fantastical hypothesis; he supposed that when God made the body, he impressed on his new-created Machine a certain series or suite of *motions;* and that when he made the fellow soul, he impressed a correspondent series of *ideas;* whose operations, throughout the whole duration of the union, were so exactly timed, that whenever an *idea* was excited, a correspondent *motion* was ever ready to satisfy the volition. Thus, for instance, when the mind had the *will* to raise the arm to the head, the body was so precontrived, as to raise, at that very moment, the part required. This he called the PRE-ESTABLISHED HARMONY; and with this he promised to do wonders.

"Yet after all," (says an excellent philosopher and best interpreter of Newton) "he owned to his friends, that this extraordinary notion was only a lusus ingenii (un jeu d'esprit) to try his parts, and laugh at the credulity of Philosophers; who are as fond of a new paradox, as Enthusiasts of a new light. If at other times he was so pleased with his own notions in his *Theodicée*, as to defend them seriously against the learned Dr. Clarke, that shews only that he angled for two different sorts of reputation, from the same performance; and unluckily he lost both. The subject

Draw to one point, and to one centre bring
Beast, Man, or Angel, Servant, Lord, or King.
For forms of Government let fools contest;
Whate'er is best administer'd is best:

COMMENTARY.

Ver. 303. *For forms of Government let fools contest; &c.*] But now the Poet, having so much commended the invention and inventors of the philosophic principles of Religion and Government, lest an evil use should be made of this, by Men's resting in theory and speculation, as they have been always too apt to do in matters where *practice* makes their happiness, he cautions his reader (from ver. 302 to 311) against this error. The seasonableness of this reproof will appear evident enough to those who know, that mad disputes about Liberty and Prerogative had once well nigh overturned our Constitution; while others about Mystery and Church Authority had almost destroyed the very spirit of our Religion.

NOTES.

subject was too serious to pass for a romance; and the principles too absurd to be admitted for truth." *Mr. Baxter's Appendix to the Inquiry into the Nature of the Human Soul*, p. 162. As this was the case, none would have thought it amiss in M. Voltaire to oppose one Romance to another, had he rested there. But his tale of *Candide*, which professes to ridicule the *Optimisme* of Leibnitz, was apparently composed in favour of an irreligious *Naturalism*, which he makes the solution of all the difficulties in the story.

Warburton.

Ver. 303. *For forms of Government, &c.*] These fine lines have been strangely misunderstood. The author, against his own express words, against the plain sense of his system, hath been conceived to mean, That all Governments and all Religions were, as to their forms and objects, indifferent. But as this wrong judgment proceeded from ignorance of the reason of the reproof, as explained above, that explanation is alone sufficient to rectify the mistake.

However, not to leave him under the least suspicion in a matter of so much importance, I shall justify the sense here given to this passage, more at large:

1. And

For modes of Faith let graceless zealots fight; 305
His can't be wrong whose life is in the right:

NOTES.

I. And first, as to Society: Let us consider the words themselves; and then compare this mistaken sense with the context.

The Poet, we may observe, is here speaking, not of civil Society at large, but of a *just* legitimate Policy:

" Th' according music of a *well-mix'd* State."

Now mixed States are of various kinds; in some of which the Democratic, in others the Aristocratic, and in others, the Monarchic form prevails. Now, as each of these mixed Forms is equally legitimate, as being founded on the principles of natural liberty, that man is guilty of the highest folly, who chuseth rather to employ himself in a speculative contest for the superior excellence of one of these *Forms* to the rest, than in promoting the good administration of that settled *Form* to which he is subject. And yet most of our warm disputes about Government have been of this kind. Again, if by *Forms of Government* must needs be meant legitimate Government, because that is the subject under debate; then by *Modes of Faith*, which is the correspondent idea, must needs be meant the modes or explanations of the true Faith, because the author is here too on the subject of true Religion:

" Relum'd her ancient light, not kindled new."

Besides, the very expression (than which nothing can be more precise) confineth us to understand by *Modes* of Faith, those human explanations of Christian Mysteries, in contending about which zeal and ignorance have so perpetually violated Charity.

Secondly, If we consider the *context;* to suppose him to mean, that *all Forms of Government* are indifferent, is making him directly contradict the preceding paragraph; where he extols the Patriot for discriminating the *true* from the *false* modes of Government. He, says the Poet,

" Taught Pow'r's *due* use to people and to kings,
Taught not to *slack*, nor *strain* its tender strings;
The less, or greater, set so justly *true*,
That touching one must strike the other too;
Till jarring interests of themselves create
Th' *according* music of a *well-mix'd* State."

Here

In faith and hope the world will disagree,
But all Mankind's concern is charity:

NOTES.

Here he recommendeth the true Form of Government, which is the *mixed.* In another place he as strongly condemneth the false, or the absolute *jure divino* Form:

" For Nature knew no *right divine* in men."

But the reader will not be displeased to see the Poet's own apology, as I find it written in the year 1740, in his own hand, in the margin of a pamphlet, where he found these two celebrated lines very much misapplied: " The author of these lines was far from meaning that no one form of Government is, in itself, better than another, (as, that mixed or limited Monarchy, for example, is not preferable to absolute), but that no form of Government, however excellent or preferable, in itself, can be sufficient to make a people happy, unless it be administered with integrity. On the contrary, the best sort of Government, when the *form* of it is preserved, and the *administration* corrupt, is most dangerous."

II. Again, to suppose the Poet to mean, that *all Religions* are indifferent, is an equally wrong, as well as uncharitable suspicion. Mr. Pope, though his subject, in this *Essay on Man,* confineth him to Natural Religion, yet he giveth frequent intimations of a more sublime Dispensation, and even of the necessity of it; particularly in his second Epistle (ver. 149, &c.), where he confesseth the weakness and insufficiency of human Reason.

And likewise in his fourth Epistle, where, speaking of the good man, the favourite of Heaven, he saith,

" For him alone, *Hope* leads from goal to goal,
And opens still, and opens on his soul:
Till, lengthen'd on to *Faith,* and unconfin'd,
It pours the bliss that fills up all the mind."

But Natural Religion never lengthened Hope on to Faith; nor did any Religion, but the Christian, ever conceive that Faith could fill the mind with happiness.

Lastly, In this very Epistle, and in this very place, speaking of the great Restorers of the *Religion of Nature,* he intimates that they could only draw God's *shadow,* not his *image*:

" Relum'd her ancient light, not kindled new,
If not God's *image, yet his shadow drew:*

as

All must be false that thwart this one great end;
And all of God, that bless Mankind or mend. 310

NOTES.

as reverencing that truth, which telleth us, this discovery was reserved for the *glorious Gospel of Christ, who is the image of God.* 2 Cor. iv. 4. *Warburton.*

Ver. 303. *For forms of Government let fools contest, &c.*] It is by no means surprising that these four lines should have been considered as inculcating a slavish subserviency to authority, both in government and religion. Nor will it perhaps be generally admitted that the explanations given by Warburton, or even by Pope himself, in the foregoing note, are sufficient to invalidate such an opinion. Warburton's plea is, that the poet is speaking only of *a just and legitimate government*, and of the *true faith;* and that to contend, where all is good, which is the best, and where all is true, which is the most true, is a speculative and foolish employment, but unfortunately the passage objected to does not admit of this construction; for it expressly allows, that there are different forms of government, (some of which must be preferable to others) and different modes of faith, (all of which cannot be right). Pope himself expressly states that "he was far from meaning that no one form of government is, in itself, better than another;" and as long as this is the case, it cannot be foolish to endeavour to ascertain which of these is the best. The fact seems to be, that the poet in describing "the world's great harmony," was led to consider whatever tended to promote the general happiness as right and good; and that it could not, therefore, be either a *bad government*, or a *false religion*, which led to so happy a result. His context therefore required that he should have said, "let fools contend about *forms* of government; THAT is the best form which renders mankind the happiest. Let graceless zealots fight about modes of faith; *that* is the best mode which renders men the most virtuous"—and this would have been consistent with his conclusion:

All must be false that thwart this one great end,
And all of God, that *bless* mankind or *mend.*

But this would have had too much the appearance of an insipid truism, and in substituting ideas of greater novelty, he has not only hazarded some very doubtful propositions, but has given occasion

Man, like the generous vine, supported lives;
The strength he gains is from th' embrace he gives.

COMMENTARY.

Ver. 311. *Man, like the generous vine, &c.*] Having thus largely considered man in his social capacity, the Poet, in order to fix a momentous truth in the mind of his reader, concludes the Epistle in recapitulating the *two Principles* which concur to the support of this part of his character, namely, SELF-LOVE and SOCIAL; and in shewing that they are only two different motions of the appetite to good, by which the Author of Nature hath enabled man to find his own happiness in the happiness of the whole. This he illustrates with a thought as sublime as that general harmony which he describes:

" On their own axis as the planets run,
Yet make at once their circle round the sun;
So two consistent motions act the soul;
And one regards itself, and one the whole.
Thus God and Nature link'd the general frame,
And bade Self-love and Social be the same."

For he hath the art of converting poetical ornament into philosophic reasoning; and of improving a simile into an analogical argument; of which, more in our next.

NOTES.

casion to imputations on the independence of his principles, which, on any other supposition than that above stated, it would be difficult to remove.

Ver. 305. *For modes of Faith, &c.*] He borrowed this from Cowley; who, extolling the piety of his friend Crashaw, the Poet, who went over to the Romish Church, and died a Canon of Loretto, says:

" Pardon, my Mother Church, if I consent
That angels led him, when from thee he went;
For e'en in error sure no danger is,
When join'd to so much piety as his:—
His faith, perhaps, in some nice tenets might
Be wrong; his life, I'm sure, was in the right."

Cowley also, possibly, might take the hint from Lord Herbert of Cherbury; who hath this distich in his works:

" Digladient

On their own axis as the planets run,
Yet make at once their circle round the sun;
So two consistent motions act the soul,
And one regards itself, and one the whole.
Thus God and Nature link'd the general frame,
And bade Self-love and Social be the same.

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" Digladient alii circa res religionis:
Quod credas nihil est, sit modo vita proba."

But " digladient is a barbarism; he should have said, digladientur, or contendant," says Dr. Jortin. *Warton.*

Ver. 313. *On their own axis*] This illustration is plainly taken from the Spectator, No. 588, said to be written by Mr. Grove: " Is therefore Benevolence inconsistent with Self-love? Are their motions contrary? No more than the diurnal rotation of the earth is opposed to its annual; or its motion round its own centre: which might be improved as an illustration of Self-love; that whirls it about the common centre of the world, answering to universal benevolence. Is the force of Self-love abated, or its interest prejudiced by benevolence? So far from it, that benevolence, though a distinct principle, is extremely serviceable to Self-love, and then doth most service when it is least designed." *Warton.*

Ver. 315. *act the soul,*] It should certainly be *actuate* or *act upon.* He has used this expression again, Iliad xv. v. 487.

" ——— This acted by a God."

Such inaccuracies are not worth remarking, but in writers so correct and eminent as our author, lest they should give a sanction to errors. Dr. Lowth in his Grammar has pointed out several in our author's works. *Warton.*

Ver. 318. *And bade Self-love and Social be the same.*] True *Self-love* is an appetite for that *proper* good, for the enjoyment of which, we were made as we are. Now that good is commensurate with all other good, and a part and portion of Universal Good: it is therefore the *same with Social,* which hath these properties. *Warburton.*

Ver. 318. *And bade Self-love*] The remarks of Warburton on the Essay on Man, on the Moral Epistles, and the Alliance betwixt Church and State, were translated into French by M. De Silhouette;

for which translation, supposing it contained opinions unfavourable to the despotic government of France, he was much censured, and had nearly been prosecuted, when he became Controller-General of the Finances; and he immediately bought up and destroyed all the copies of this work that could be found.

In this passage (ver. 318.) Pope uses the very words of Bolingbroke: "Thus it happens that Self-love and Social are divided, and set in opposition to one another in the conduct of particular men, whilst in the making laws, and the regulation of government, they continue the same." Minutes of Essays, section 51. addressed to Pope. *Warton.*

EPISTLE IV.

Our Poet having, in the three former Epistles, treated of man in all the three respects in which he can be considered; namely, first, Of his Nature and State with respect to the Universe; secondly, With respect to Himself; thirdly, With respect to Society: seems to have finished his subject in the three foregoing Epistles. This fourth Epistle, therefore, on Happiness, may be thought to be adscititious, and out of its proper place, and ought to have made part of the second Epistle, where Man is considered with respect to Himself. I formerly mentioned this to Dr. Akenside and Mr. Harris, who were of my opinion. *Warton.*

ARGUMENT OF EPISTLE IV.

Of the Nature and State of MAN, *with respect to* Happiness.

I. *FALSE Notions of Happiness, Philosophical and Popular, answered from* Ver. 19 *to* 27. II. *It is the End of all Men, and attainable by all,* Ver. 30. *God intends Happiness to be* equal; *and to be so, it must be* social, *since all particular Happiness depends on general, and since he governs by* general, *not* particular Laws, Ver. 37. *As it is necessary for* Order, *and the peace and welfare of* Society, *that* external goods *should be* unequal, *Happiness is not made to consist in these,* Ver. 51. *But, notwithstanding that inequality, the* balance *of Happiness among Mankind is kept even by Providence, by the two Passions of* Hope *and* Fear, Ver. 70. III. *What the Happiness of* Individuals *is, as far as is consistent with the constitution of this world; and that the* good Man *has here the advantage,* Ver. 77. *The error of imputing to* Virtue *what are only the calamities of* Nature, *or of* Fortune, Ver. 94. IV. *The folly of expecting that God should alter his general Laws in favour of particulars,* Ver. 121. V. *That we are not judges who are good; but that whoever they are, they must be happiest,* Ver. 133, &c. VI. *That* external goods *are not the proper rewards, but often inconsistent with, or destructive of, Virtue,* Ver. 165. *That even these can make no Man happy without Virtue: Instanced in* Riches, Ver. 183. Honours, Ver. 191. Nobility, Ver. 203. Greatness, Ver. 215. Fame, Ver. 235. Superior Talents, Ver. 257. &c. *With pictures of human Infelicity in Men possessed of them all,* Ver. 267, &c. VII. That Virtue only *constitutes a Happiness, whose object is* universal, *and whose prospect* eternal, Ver. 307, &c. *That the* perfection *of* Virtue *and* Happiness *consists in a* conformity *to the* ORDER *of* PROVIDENCE *here, and a* Resignation *to it here and hereafter,* Ver. 326, &c.

EPISTLE IV.

Oh Happiness! our being's end and aim!
Good, Pleasure, Ease, Content! whate'er thy name;
That something still which prompts th' eternal sigh,
For which we bear to live, or dare to die,

COMMENTARY.

The two foregoing Epistles having considered Man with regard to the Means (that is, in all his relations, whether as an individual, or a member of *Society*), this last comes to consider him with regard to the End, that is, *Happiness.*

It opens with an invocation to Happiness, in the manner of the ancient Poets; who, when destitute of a patron God, applied to the Muse; and if she was not at leisure, took up with any simple Virtue next at hand, to inspire and prosper their undertakings. This was the ancient invocation, which few modern Poets have had the art to imitate with any degree either of spirit or decorum: but our author hath contrived to make *his* subservient to the method and reasoning of his philosophic composition. I will endeavour to explain so uncommon a beauty.

It is to be observed, that the Pagan Deities had each their several *names* and *places of abode;* with some of which they were supposed to

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Ver. 1. *Oh Happiness!*] He begins his address to Happiness after the manner of the ancient hymns, by enumerating the titles and various places of abode of this goddess. He has undoubtedly personified

VARIATIONS.

Ver. 1. *Oh Happiness! &c.*] In the MS. thus:

Oh Happiness! to which we all aspire,
Wing'd with strong hope, and borne by full desire:
That ease, for which in want, in wealth we sigh;
That ease, for which we labour and we die. *Warburton.*

Which still so near us, yet beyond us lies, 5
O'erlook'd, seen double, by the fool, and wise!

COMMENTARY.

to be more delighted than others; and consequently to be then most propitious when invoked by the favourite name and place. Hence we find the hymns of Homer, Orpheus, and Callimachus to be chiefly employed in reckoning up the several titles and habitations by which the patron God was known and distinguished. Our Poet hath made these two circumstances serve to introduce his subject. His purpose is to write of *Happiness:* method, therefore, requires that he first define what men mean by Happiness; and this he does in the ornament of a poetic invocation; in which the several names that *Happiness* goes by are enumerated:

" Oh Happiness! our being's end and aim!
Good, Pleasure, Ease, Content! whate'er thy NAME."

After the DEFINITION, that which follows next, is the PROPOSITION, which is, *that human Happiness consists not in external Advantages, but in Virtue.* For the subject of this Epistle is to detect the *false* notions of Happiness, and to settle and explain the *true;* and this the Poet lays down in the next sixteen lines. Now the enumeration of the several *situations* where Happiness is supposed to reside, is a summary of *false* Happiness placed in externals:

" Plant of celestial seed! if dropp'd below,
Say, in what mortal soil thou deign'st to grow?

Fair

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personified her at the beginning, but he seems to have dropped that idea in the seventh line, where the deity is suddenly transformed into a plant; from thence this metaphor of a vegetable is carried on distinctly through the eleven succeeding lines, till he suddenly returns to consider Happiness again as a person, in the eighteenth line:

" And fled from Monarchs, ST. JOHN! dwells with thee!"

For to fly and to dwell, cannot justly be predicated of the same subject, that immediately before was described as twining with laurels, and being reaped in harvests.

Of the numberless treatises that have been written on Happiness, one of the most sensible is that of Fontenelle, in the third volume of his works. *Warton.*

Plant of celestial seed! if dropp'd below,
Say, in what mortal soil thou deign'st to grow?
Fair op'ning to some Court's propitious shine,
Or deep with diamonds in the flaming mine?
Twin'd with the wreaths Parnassian laurels yield,
Or reap'd in iron harvests of the field?
Where grows?—where grows it not? If vain our toil,
We ought to blame the culture, not the soil.
Fix'd to no spot is Happiness sincere;
'Tis no where to be found, or every where;
'Tis never to be bought, but always free,
And fled from Monarchs, St. John! dwells with thee.
Ask of the learn'd the way? The learn'd are blind;
This bids to serve, and that to shun mankind;

COMMENTARY.

Fair op'ning to some Court's propitious shine,
Or deep with diamonds in the flaming mine?
Twin'd with the wreaths Parnassian laurels yield,
Or reap'd in iron harvests of the field?"

The six remaining lines deliver the *true* notion of Happiness, and shew that it is rightly placed in Virtue. Which is summed up in these two:

" Fix'd to no spot is Happiness sincere;
'Tis no where to be found, or every where."

The Poet, having thus defined his terms, and laid down his proposition, proceeds to the support of his Thesis; the various arguments of which make up the body of the Epistle.

Ver. 19. *Ask of the learn'd, &c.*] He begins (from ver. 18 to 29.)

NOTES.

Ver. 18. St John! *dwells with thee.*] Among the many passages

Some place the bliss in action, some in ease,
Those call it pleasure, and contentment these;
Some sunk to beasts, find pleasure end in pain;
Some swell'd to Gods, confess ev'n virtue vain;

COMMENTARY.

29.) with detecting the false notions of Happiness. These are of two kinds, the *Philosophical* and *Popular*. The Popular he had recapitulated in the invocation, when Happiness was called upon, at her several supposed places of abode: the Philosophical only remained to be delivered:

" Ask of the learn'd the way? The learn'd are blind;
This bids to serve, and that to shun mankind:
Some place the bliss in action, some in ease;
Those call it pleasure, and contentment these."

They differed as well in the *means*, as in the nature of the *end*. Some placed Happiness in Action, some in Contemplation; the first called it Pleasure, the second Ease. Of those who placed it in Action and called it Pleasure, the route they pursued either sunk them into *sensual Pleasures*, which ended in *Pain*; or led them in search of *imaginary Perfections*, unsuitable to their nature and station (see Ep. i.), which ended in *Vanity*. Of those who placed it in Ease, the contemplative station they were fixed in made some, for their quiet, find truth in *every thing*; others, in *nothing*:

" Who thus define it, say they more or less
Than this, that Happiness is Happiness?"

The

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sages in Bolingbroke's Posthumous Works that bear a close resemblance to the tenets of this Essay, are the following: Vol. iv. octavo edition, pp. 223, 324, 388, 389, also pp. 49, 316, 328, 336, 337, 339. And in Vol. v. pp. 5, 6, 17, 92, 51, 113, 310.

Warton.

Ver. 21. 23. *Some place the bliss in action,——*
Some sunk to beasts, &c.]

1. Those who place Happiness, or the *summum bonum*, in Pleasure, Ἡδονή; such as the Cyrenaic sect, called, on that account, the Hedonic. 2. Those who place it in a certain tranquillity or calmness of Mind, which they call Εὐθυμία; such as the Democritic

Or indolent, to each extreme they fall,
To trust in every thing, or doubt of all.
Who thus define it, say they more or less
Than this, that Happiness is Happiness?
Take Nature's path, and mad Opinion's leave;
All states can reach it, and all heads conceive;
Obvious her goods, in no extreme they dwell;
There needs but thinking right, and meaning well;

COMMENTARY.

The confutation of these Philosophic errors he shews to be very easy, one common fallacy running through them all; namely this, that instead of telling us in what the happiness of *human nature* consists, which was what was asked of them, each busies himself in explaining in what he placed *his own*.

Ver. 29. *Take Nature's path, &c.*] The Poet then proceeds (from ver. 28 to 35.) to reform their mistakes; and shews them that, if they will but take the road of Nature, and leave that of mad Opinion, they will soon find Happiness to be a good of the *species*, and, like common sense, equally distributed to all mankind.

NOTES.

critic sect. 3. The Epicurean. 4. The Stoic. 5. The Protagorean, which held that Man was *πάντων χρημάτων μέτρον, the measure of all things;* for that all things which *appear* to him, *are*, and those things which *appear not* to any Man, *are not;* so that every imagination or opinion of every Man was true. 6. The Sceptic; whose absolute doubt is, with great judgment, said to be the effect of indolence, as well as the absolute trust of the Protagorean. For the same dread of labour attending the search of truth, which makes the Protagorean presume it is always at hand, makes the Sceptic conclude it is never to be found. The only difference is, that the laziness of the one is desponding, and the laziness of the other sanguine; yet both can give it a good name, and call it HAPPINESS. *Warburton.*

Ver. 23. *Some sunk to beasts, &c.*] These four lines added in the last edition, as necessary to complete the summary of the false pursuits after Happiness among the Greek Philosophers.
Warburton.

And mourn our various portions as we please,
Equal is common sense, and common ease.
Remember, Man, "the Universal Cause
"Acts not by partial, but by general laws:"

COMMENTARY.

Ver. 35. *Remember, Man, &c.*] Having exposed the two false species of Happiness, the *Philosophical* and *Popular*, and denounced the true; in order to establish the last, he goes on to a confutation of the two former.

I. He first (from ver. 34 to 49.) confutes the *Philosophical*; which, as we said, makes Happiness a particular, not a general good. And this two ways; 1. From his grand principle, that God acts by general laws; the consequence of which is, that Happiness, which supports the well-being of every system, must needs be universal, and not partial, as the Philosophers conceived. 2. From fact, that Man instinctively concurs with this designation of Providence, to make Happiness universal, by his having no delight in any thing uncommunicated or uncommunicable.

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Ver. 35. *Remember, Man, "the Universal Cause*
Acts not by partial, but by general laws."]
I reckon it for nothing that M. du Resnel saw none of the fine reasoning (from these two lines, to ver. 73) in which the Poet confutes both the *philosophic* and *popular* errors concerning happiness. What I can least bear is his perverting these two lines to a horrid and senseless *fatalism*, foreign to the argument in hand, and directly contrary to the Poet's general principles—

——"Une loi générale
Détermine toujours la cause principale;"

i. e. *a general Law always determines the first Cause:* which is the very *Fate* of the Ancient Pagans; who supposed that the *Destinies* gave law to the *Father of Gods and men.* The Poet says again, soon after, Ver. 49, "Order is heaven's first Law," i. e. *the first Law made by God relates to Order:* which is a beautiful allusion to the Scripture history of the Creation, when God first appeased the disorders of Chaos, and separated the light from the darkness. Let us now hear his translator:

"L'Ordre, cet inflexible et grand Legislateur
Qui des décrets du Ciel est le premier auteur."

Order,

And makes what Happiness we justly call
Subsist not in the good of one, but all.
There's not a blessing individuals find,
But some way leans and hearkens to the kind;
No bandit fierce, no tyrant mad with pride,
No cavern'd hermit, rests self-satisfied:
Who most to shun or hate Mankind pretend,
Seek an admirer, or would fix a friend.
Abstract what others feel, what others think,
All pleasures sicken, and all glories sink:
Each has his share; and who would more obtain,
Shall find the pleasure pays not half the pain.
ORDER is heaven's first law; and this confess'd,
Some are, and must be, greater than the rest,

COMMENTARY.

Ver. 49. *Order is heaven's first law;*] II. In the second place (from ver. 48 to 67.), he confutes the popular error concerning Happiness, namely, that it consists in externals. This he does, *first*, by inquiring into the reasons of the present providential disposition of external goods; a topic of confutation chosen with the greatest accuracy and penetration. For, if it appears they were given in the manner we see them distributed, for reasons different from the Happiness of individuals, it is absurd to think that they should make part of that Happiness. He shews, therefore, that disparity of external possessions among men was for the sake of Society: 1. To promote the harmony and happiness of a system; because the want of external goods in some, and the abundance in others, increase general harmony in the obliger and obliged. Yet here (says he) mark the impartial wisdom of Heaven; this very inequality of externals, by contributing to general harmony and order, produceth an equality of Happiness amongst individuals.

2. To prevent perpetual discord amongst men equal in power; which an equal distribution of external goods would necessarily

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occasion

Order, that inflexible and grand Legislator, who is the first author of the Law of Heaven. A proposition abominable in most senses; absurd in all. *Warburton.*

More rich, more wise; but who infers from hence
That such are happier, shocks all common sense.
Heaven to Mankind impartial we confess,
If all are equal in their Happiness:
But mutual wants this Happiness increase;
All Nature's difference keeps all Nature's peace.
Condition, circumstance, is not the thing;
Bliss is the same in subject or in king,
In who obtain defence, or who defend,
In him who is, or him who finds a friend:

COMMENTARY.

occasion. From hence he concludes, that as external goods were not given for the reward of virtue, but for many different purposes, God could not, if he intended Happiness for all, place it in the enjoyment of externals.

NOTES.

Ver. 50. *Some are, and must be,*] So much has of late years been said of the doctrine of Equality, and so much has it been perversely misinterpreted and misunderstood, that it is to be wished that those who declaim on this subject, would only look into the three following fashionable French authors, who surely were staunch lovers of liberty, to see the absurdity of the notion of Equality of Ranks; namely, I. Montesquieu, in the third chapter of his eighth Book. II. D'Alembert, in his comment on this chapter of Montesquieu. III. Voltaire, in the Essay on the Spirit of Nations, chapter 67, on Switzerland. "You are not, by this term Equality," says the last, "to understand that absurd and impossible Equality, by which the master and the servant, the magistrate and the artificer, the plaintiff and the judge, are confounded together; but that Equality by which the subject depends only on the laws." *Warton.*

VARIATIONS.

After Ver. 52. in the MS.

Say not, "Heaven's here profuse, there poorly saves,
"And for one Monarch makes a thousand slaves."
You'll find, when Causes and their Ends are known,
'Twas for the thousand Heaven has made that one.

Warburton.

Heaven breathes thro' ev'ry member of the whole
One common blessing, as one common soul.
But Fortune's gifts if each alike possess'd,
And each were equal, must not all contest?
If then to all men Happiness was meant,
God in externals could not place content.
Fortune her gifts may variously dispose,
And these be happy call'd, unhappy those;
But Heaven's just balance equal will appear,
While those are plac'd in hope, and these in fear:
Not present good or ill, the joy or curse,
But future views of better or of worse.

COMMENTARY.

Ver. 67. *Fortune her gifts may variously dispose, &c.*] His *second* argument (from ver. 66 to 73.) against the popular error of Happiness being placed in externals, is, that the possession of them is inseparably attended with fear; the want of them with hope; which directly crossing all their pretensions to making happy, evidently shews that God had placed Happiness elsewhere. And hence, in concluding this argument, he takes occasion (from ver. 72 to 77.) to upbraid the desperate folly and impiety of those, who, in spite of God and Nature, will yet attempt to place Happiness in externals:

"Oh sons of earth! attempt ye still to rise,
By mountains piled on mountains, to the skies?
Heaven still with laughter the vain toil surveys,
And buries madmen in the heaps they raise."

VARIATIONS.

After Ver. 66. in the MS.

'Tis peace of mind alone is at a stay:
The rest mad Fortune gives or takes away.
All other bliss by accident's debarr'd;
But Virtue's, in the instant, a reward;
In hardest trials operates the best,
And more is relish'd as the more distress'd. *Warburton.*

Oh sons of earth! attempt ye still to rise,
By mountains piled on mountains, to the skies?
Heaven still with laughter the vain toil surveys,
And buries madmen in the heaps they raise.
Know, all the good that individuals find,
Or God and Nature meant to mere Mankind,
Reason's whole pleasure, all the joys of sense,
Lie in three words, health, peace, and competence.
But health consists with temperance alone;
And peace, oh Virtue! peace is all thy own.

COMMENTARY.

Ver. 77. *Know, all the good, &c.*] The Poet having thus confuted the two errors concerning Happiness, the *Philosophical* and *Popular;* and proved that true Happiness was neither solitary and partial, nor yet placed in externals, goes on (from ver. 76 to 83.) to shew in what it doth consist. He had before said in general, and repeated it, that Happiness lay in common to the whole species. He now brings us better acquainted with it, in a more explicit account of its nature; and tells us, it is all contained in *health, peace,* and *competence;* but that these are to be gained only by VIRTUE, namely, by temperance, innocence, and industry.

NOTES.

Ver. 79. *Reason's whole pleasure, &c.*] This is a beautiful periphrasis for Happiness; for all we feel of good is by *sensation* and *reflection.* But the translator, who seemed little to concern himself with the Poet's philosophy or argument, mistook this description of *happiness* for a description of the *intellectual and sensitive faculties, opposed to one another;* and therefore turns it thus,

" Le charme séducteur, dont s'enivrant les sens,
Les plaisirs de l'esprit, encore plus ravissans;"

And so, with the highest absurdity, not only makes the Poet constitute *sensual excesses* a part of human happiness, but likewise the product of Virtue. *Warburton.*

Ver. 82. *And Peace, &c.*] *Conscious* innocence, says the Poet, is the only source of *internal peace;* and *known* innocence, of *external;* therefore, peace is the sole issue of Virtue, or, in his own emphatic

The good or bad the gifts of fortune gain;
But these less taste them, as they worse obtain.
Say, in pursuit of profit or delight,
Who risk the most, that take wrong means, or right?
Of vice or virtue, whether blest or curs'd,
Which meets contempt, or which compassion first?
Count all th' advantage prosperous vice attains,
'Tis but what virtue flies from and disdains:
And grant the bad what happiness they would,
One they must want, which is, to pass for good.

COMMENTARY.

Ver. 83. *The good or bad, &c.*] Hitherto the Poet hath only considered *health* and *peace:*

" But health consists with temperance alone;
And peace, oh Virtue! peace is all thy own."

One head yet remained to be spoken to, namely, *competence.* In the pursuit of health and peace there is no danger of running into excess; but the case is different with regard to competence: here wealth and affluence would be apt to be mistaken for it, in men's passionate pursuit after *external* goods. To obviate this mistake, therefore, the Poet shews (from ver. 82 to 93.) that, as exorbitant wealth adds nothing to the Happiness arising from a *competence,* so, as it is generally ill-gotten, it is attended with circumstances which weaken another part of this triple cord, namely, *peace.*

" Reason's

NOTES.

emphatic words, *peace* is all *thy own;* a conclusive observation in his argument; which stands thus: Is happiness rightly placed in externals? No; for it consists in health, peace, and competence. Health and competence are the product of temperance; and peace, of perfect innocence. *Warburton.*

VARIATIONS.

After Ver. 92. in the MS.

Let sober moralists correct their speech;
No bad man's happy; he is great, or rich. *Warburton.*

Oh blind to truth, and God's whole scheme below,
Who fancy bliss to vice, to virtue woe!
Who sees and follows that great scheme the best,
Best knows the blessing, and will most be blest.
But fools, the good alone unhappy call,
For ills or accidents that chance to all.

COMMENTARY.

" Reason's whole pleasure, all the joys of sense,
Lie in three words, health, peace, and competence.
But health consists with temperance alone;
And peace, oh Virtue! peace is all thy own."

Ver. 93. *Oh blind to truth, &c.*] Our author having thus largely confuted the mistake, that Happiness consists in externals, proceeds to expose the terrible consequences of such an opinion, on the sentiments and practice of all sorts of men; making the *Dissolute*, impious and atheistical; the *Religious*, uncharitable and intolerant; and the *Good*, restless and discontent. For when it is once taken for granted, that happiness consists in externals, it is immediately seen that ill men are often more happy than the good; which sets all conditions on objecting to the ways of Providence: and some even on rashly attempting to rectify its dispensations, though by the violation of all laws, divine and human. Now this being the most important part of the subject under consideration, is deservedly treated most at large. And here it will be proper to take notice of the art of the Poet in making this confutation serve, at the same time, for a full solution of all objections which might be made to his main proposition, *that Happiness consists not in externals.*

I. He begins, first of all, with the atheistical complainers; and pursues their impiety from ver. 92 to 131.

" Oh blind to truth! and God's whole scheme below," &c.

Ver. 97. *But fools, the good alone unhappy call, &c.*] He exposes their folly, even in their own notions of external goods:

1. By examples (from ver. 98 to 111.) where he shews, *first*, that if good men have been untimely cut off, this is not to be ascribed to their virtue, but to a contempt of life, which hurried them

See FALKLAND dies, the virtuous and the just!
See god-like TURENNE prostrate on the dust! 100

COMMENTARY.

them into dangers. *Secondly*, That if they will still persist in ascribing untimely death to virtue, they must needs, on the same principle, ascribe long life to it also; consequently, as the argument, in fact, concludes both ways, in logic it concludes neither.

" Say, was it virtue, more tho' heaven ne'er gave,
Lamented Digby! sunk thee to the grave?
Tell me, if virtue made the son expire,
Why, full of days and honour, lives the sire?"

NOTES.

Ver. 99. *See* FALKLAND] His genius, his learning, his integrity, his patriotism, are eloquently displayed by Cowley, as well as by Clarendon; but Lord Orford thinks the portrait by the latter too flattering and over-charged. If any proofs had been wanting of the violence and haughtiness of archbishop Laud, this virtuous nobleman's opposing him would have been sufficient. He assisted Chillingworth in his great work against Popery; and he wrote some very elegant verses to Sandys, on his Translation of the Psalms. The gallantry of Sir Philip Sidney, mentioned in a succeeding line (101.) cannot be disputed; but whether the death of this valorous knight was a proper example of suffering virtue to be here introduced, is another question. *Warton.*

Ver. 100. *See godlike* TURENNE] This epithet has a peculiar justness; the great man to whom it is applied not being distinguished from other generals, for any of his superior qualities, so much as for his providential care of those whom he led to war; in which he was so intent, that his chief purpose in taking on himself the command of armies, seems to have been the preservation of mankind. In this *godlike* care he was more remarkably employed throughout the whole course of that famous campaign in which he lost his life. *Warburton.*

Ver. 100. *See godlike* TURENNE] This great general was killed July 27, 1675, by a cannon-shot, near the village of Saltyback, in going to choose a place whereon to erect a battery. " No one," says Voltaire, " is ignorant of the circumstances of his death; but we

See SIDNEY bleeds amid the martial strife!
Was this their virtue, or contempt of life?
Say, was it virtue, more tho' heaven ne'er gave,
Lamented DIGBY! sunk thee to the grave?
Tell me, if virtue made the son expire,
Why, full of days and honour, lives the sire?
Why drew Marseilles' good bishop purer breath,
When Nature sicken'd, and each gale was death?

NOTES.

we cannot here refrain a review of the principal of them, for the same reason that they are still talked of every day. It seems as if one could not too often repeat, that the same bullet which killed him, having shot off the arm of St. Hilaire, lieutenant-general of the artillery, his son came and bewailed his misfortune with many tears; but the father, looking towards Turenne, said, 'It is not I, but that great man, who should be lamented.' These words may be compared with the most heroic sayings recorded in all history; and are the best eulogy that can be bestowed upon Turenne. It is uncommon under a despotic government, where people are actuated only by private interests, for those who have served their country to die regretted by the public. Nevertheless Turenne was lamented both by the soldiers and people; and Louvois was the only one who rejoiced at his death. The honours which the king ordered to be paid to his memory are known to every one; and that he was interred at St. Denis, in the same manner as the constable du Guesclin." But how much is the glory of Turenne tarnished by his cruel devastation of the Palatinate! *Warton.*

Ver. 101. *See* SIDNEY *bleeds*] Among the many things related of the life and character of this all-accomplished person, it does not seem to be much known, that he was the intimate friend and patron of the famous atheist Giordano Bruno; was in a secret club with him and Sir Fulk Greville, held in London in 1587; and that the Spaccio della Bestia Triomfante was at that time composed and printed in London, and dedicated to Sir Philip. See General Dictionary, vol. iii. p. 622. *Warton.*

Ver. 107. *Why drew*] M. de Belsance, bishop of Marseilles. This illustrious prelate was of a noble family in Guienne. In early life

Or why so long (in life if long can be)
Lent heaven a parent to the poor and me? 110

NOTES.

life he took the vows, and belonged to a convent of Jesuits. He was made bishop of Marseilles in 1709.

In the plague of that city, in the year 1720, he distinguished himself by his zeal and activity, being the pastor, the physician, and the magistrate of his flock, whilst that horrid calamity prevailed. Louis XV. in 1723, offered him a more considerable bishopric (to which peculiar feudal honours were annexed) that of Laon in Picardy. He refused, however, to quit that of Marseilles, giving for a reason, that he could not desert a flock which had been so endeared to him by their misfortunes and his own exertions. The king, however, insisted upon his accepting of the privilege of appealing, in all his own causes, either temporal or spiritual, to the Parliament of Paris. The Pope sent him from Rome an ornament called Pallium, worn only by archbishops. He died at a very advanced age, in the year 1755, after having founded a college in Marseilles, which bears his name, and after having written the History of the Lives of his Predecessors in that See. When he was grand vicar of Agen, he published the life of a female relation of his, who was eminent for her piety, with this title, "Vie de Susanne Henriette de Foix Candale." Vaniere has finely celebrated him. Lib. iii. of the Prædium Rusticum.

Warton.

Ver. 108. *When Nature sicken'd,*] A verse of marvellous comprehension and expressiveness, adopted from Dryden's Miscellanies, ver. 6. The effects of this pestilence are more emphatically set forth in these few words, than in forty such Odes as Sprat's on the Plague at Athens. A fine example of what Dion. Halicarnassus calls Πυκνότητος καὶ σεμνότητος. *Warton.*

Ver. 110. *Lent heaven a parent, &c.*] This last instance of the Poet's illustration of the ways of Providence, the reader sees, has a peculiar elegance; where a tribute of piety to a parent is paid in return of thanks to, and made subservient of his vindication of, the great Giver and Father of all things. The mother of the author, a person of great piety and charity, died the year this poem was finished, viz. 1733. *Warburton.*

What makes all physical or moral ill?
There deviates Nature, and here wanders will.
God sends not ill; if rightly understood,
Or partial ill is universal good,

COMMENTARY.

Ver. 111. *What makes all physical or moral ill?*] 2. He exposes their folly (from ver. 110 to 131.) by considerations drawn from the system of Nature: and these twofold, natural and moral. You accuse God, says he, because the good man is subject to natural and moral evil. Let us see whence these proceed. Natural evil is the necessary consequence of a material world so constituted. But that this constitution was best, we have proved in the first Epistle. Moral evil ariseth from the depraved will of Man. Therefore neither one nor the other from God. But you say (adds the Poet, to these impious complainers) that though it be fit Man should suffer the miseries which he brings upon himself, by the commission of moral evil; yet it seems unfit that his innocent posterity should bear a share of the burden. To this, says he, I reply,

> " We just as wisely might of heaven complain
> That righteous Abel was destroy'd by Cain,
> As that the righteous son is ill at ease,
> When his lewd father gave the dire disease."

But

NOTES.

Ver. 112. *There deviates Nature,*] How can Nature be said to deviate, when we before have been told, that the general " Order has been kept, since the whole began." And as to the wandering of the will, objectors persist in saying, that it is precisely the same thing, whether a God of infinite power and knowledge created beings originally wicked and miserable, or gave them a power to make themselves so; foreknowing that they would employ that power to their own destruction.

This is the objection for ever repeated by Bayle, and which our limited understandings cannot fully answer,

" But find no end in wandering mazes lost." *Warton.*

The

Or change admits, or Nature lets it fall; 115
Short, and but rare, till Man improv'd it all.

COMMENTARY.

But you will still say, Why doth not God either prevent or immediately repair these evils? You may as well ask, why he doth not work continual miracles, and every moment reverse the established laws of Nature:

"Shall burning Etna, if a sage requires," &c.

This is the force of the Poet's reasoning; and these the men to whom he addresseth it; namely, the libertine cavillers against Providence.

NOTES.

The first of these objections is answered by observing that the *general* order is preserved, notwithstanding deviations in *particular* instances; which, both in the natural and moral world, are *occasional* and *temporary*. Thus, we are told, *Storms and tempests break not heaven's design*, and *Heaven disappoints th' effect of every vice*. And as to the second, it may be sufficient to remark, that a doctrine which represents the Creator as having formed beings either for the *express purpose*, or with a *foreknowledge*, of their being consigned to eternal torments, is *irreconcileable* with his *goodness*, as exemplified in all we know of him, and therefore CANNOT POSSIBLY BE TRUE.

Ver. 115. *Or change admits,*] How change can admit, or Nature let fall any evil, however short and rare it may be, under the government of an all-wise, powerful, and benevolent Creator, is hardly to be understood. The reasons assigned for the Origin of Evil, in these two lines, are surely not solid and satisfactory, and the doctrine is expressed in obscure and equivocal terms. These six lines are perhaps the most exceptionable in the whole Poem, in point both of sentiment and expression. *Warton.*

On this it may be observed, that all imperfection is evil, and imperfection is unavoidable in all created beings, unless they

VARIATIONS.

After Ver. 116. in the MS.

Of every evil, since the world began,
The real source is not in God, but man. *Warburton.*

We just as wisely might of heaven complain
That righteous Abel was destroy'd by Cain,
As that the virtuous son is ill at ease
When his lewd father gave the dire disease!
Think we, like some weak prince, th' Eternal Cause
Prone for his favourites to reverse his laws?
Shall burning Etna, if a sage requires,
Forget to thunder, and recall her fires?
On air or sea new motions be impress'd,
Oh blameless Bethel! to relieve thy breast?

NOTES.

they were made equal to their Creator, which it is absurd to suppose. The only question then is, whether such evil is greater than is indispensable to the quantity of good produced. This the poet has endeavoured to shew is not the case, and that partial ill is *universal good*. In the Creator alone good is *positive* and *absolute*; in the created, it is only *relative*; and as we know light only from darkness, and harmony from discord, so we know virtue only from vice, and are thereby placed in a state of moral discipline, particularly suited to a responsible and improvable being.

Ver. 121. *Think we, like some weak prince, &c.*] Agreeable hereunto, Holy Scripture, in its account of things under the common Providence of Heaven, never represents miracles as wrought for the sake of him who is the object of them, but in order to give credit to some of God's extraordinary dispensations to Mankind. *Warburton.*

Ver. 123. *Shall burning Etna, &c.*] Alluding to the fate of those two great naturalists, Empedocles and Pliny, who both perished by too near an approach to Etna and Vesuvius, while they were exploring the cause of their eruptions. *Warburton.*

Ver. 125. *On air or sea*] It was observed in the Adventurer, many years before the elegant Letter to Mr. Mason, on the Marks of Imitation, appeared, that this whole passage, and even the expressions,

When the loose mountain trembles from on high,
Shall gravitation cease, if you go by?
Or some old temple, nodding to its fall,
For Chartres' head reserve the hanging wall? 130
But still this world, so fitted for the knave,
Contents us not. A better shall we have?

COMMENTARY.

Ver. 131. *But still this world, &c.*] II. But now, so unhappy is the condition of our corrupt nature, that these are not the only complainers. RELIGIOUS men are but too apt, if not to speak out, yet sometimes secretly to murmur against Providence, and say, *its*

NOTES.

pressions, " New motions be impress'd," and " Shall gravitation cease," were taken from Wollaston, section v. p. 99.

Wollaston, in this section, endeavours to prove, that " It is not impossible, that such laws of nature, and such a series of causes and effects may be originally designed; that not only general provisions may be made for the several species of beings, but even particular cases, at least many of them, may also be provided for, without innovations or alterations in the course of nature." From whence he infers the doctrine of a particular Providence, and the reasonableness and efficacy of prayer; a doctrine for which Bolingbroke, in a variety of passages in his works, is fond of condemning Wollaston, and his Defence of this Duty of Prayer. I have received the most authentic information that Dr. Middleton left behind him a treatise on this subject; which Mrs. Middleton, by the advice of a judicious friend, was prevailed on not to publish, from the offence it might have given. But it was communicated to Lord Bolingbroke at his earnest request, and returned to Mrs. Middleton after he had kept it a considerable time. After Bolingbroke's death, a copy of it was found in his library.

Warton.

Ver. 130. *the hanging wall?*] Eusebius is weak enough to relate, from the testimonies of Irenæus and Polycarp, that the roof of the building under which Cerinthus the heretic was bathing, providentially fell down and crushed him to death. Lib. 3. cap. 29.

Warton.

A kingdom of the Just then let it be:
But first consider how those Just agree.

COMMENTARY.

its ways are not equal. Those especially, who are more inordinately devoted to a sect or party, are scandalized, that the *Just* (for such they esteem themselves) the *Just*, who are to judge the world, have no better a portion in their own inheritance and dominion. The Poet, therefore, now leaves those more professedly impious, and turns to these less profligate complainers (from ver. 130 to 149.):

"But still this world, so fitted for the knave," &c.

As the former wanted external goods to be the reward of virtue for the moral man, so these want them for the pious, in order to have *a kingdom of the Just.* To this the Poet holds it sufficient to answer; Pray first agree among yourselves, who those *Just are.* As they are not likely to do this, he bids them to rest satisfied; to remember his fundamental principle, that *whatever is, is right;* and to content themselves (as their religion teaches them to profess a more than ordinary submission to the will of Providence) with that common answer which he, with so much reason and piety, gives to every kind of complainer.

However, though there be yet no *kingdom of the Just*, there is still no kingdom of the Unjust; both the virtuous and the vicious (whatsoever becomes of those whom every sect calls the *Faithful*) have their share in external goods; and what is more, the virtuous have infinitely the most enjoyment of their share:

"This world, 'tis true,
Was made for Cæsar, but for Titus too:
And which more blest? who chain'd his country? say!
Or he whose virtue sigh'd to lose a day?"

I have been the more solicitous to explain this last argument, and to shew *against whom* it is directed, because a great deal depends upon it for the illustration of the sense, and the defence of the Poet's reasoning. For if we suppose him to be still addressing himself to those IMPIOUS complainers, confuted in the forty preceding lines, we should make him guilty of a paralogism, in the argument about the Just; and in the illustration of it by the case of Calvin. For then the Libertine asks, Why the Just, that is, the *moral man*, is not rewarded? The answer is, That none but God

The good must merit God's peculiar care;
But who, but God, can tell us who they are?
One thinks on Calvin heaven's own spirit fell;
Another deems him instrument of hell;
If Calvin feel heaven's blessing, or its rod,
This cries, there is, and that, there is no God.
What shocks one part will edify the rest,
Nor with one system can they all be blest.
The very best will variously incline,
And what rewards your virtue, punish mine.

COMMENTARY.

God can tell, who the Just, that is, the *faithful man*, is. Where the term is changed, in order to support the argument; for about the truly moral man there is no dispute; about the truly faithful, or the orthodox, a great deal. But take the Poet right, as arguing here against RELIGIOUS complainers, and the reasoning is strict and logical. They ask, Why the truly faithful are not rewarded? He answereth, "They may be, for aught you know; for none but God can tell who they are."

NOTES.

Ver. 136. *tell us who they are?*] This again is exactly copied from Wollaston, section v. p. 110, who quotes Virgil on the occasion:

——Cadit et Ripheus justissimus unus
Qui fuit in Teucris, et servantissimus æqui:
Diis aliter visum.——— *Warton.*

Ver. 138. *instrument of hell;*] The hard fate of Servetus will remain for ever as an indelible mark of the violence, cruelty, and intolerance of Calvin. *Warton.*

VARIATIONS.

After ver. 142. in some Editions:

Give each a system, all must be at strife;
What different systems for a Man and Wife!

The joke, though lively, was ill placed, and therefore struck out of the text. *Warburton.*

WHATEVER IS, IS RIGHT. This world, 'tis true,
Was made for Cæsar, but for Titus too:
And which more blest? who chain'd his country? say!
Or he whose virtue sigh'd to lose a day?
"But sometimes virtue starves, while vice is fed."
What then? Is the reward of virtue bread?
Taht, vice may merit; 'tis the price of toil;
The knave deserves it, when he tills the soil;
The knave deserves it, when he tempts the main,
Where folly fights for kings, or dives for gain.
The good man may be weak, be indolent;
Nor is his claim to plenty, but content.
But grant him riches, your demand is o'er?
"No! Shall the good want health, the good want pow'r?"

COMMENTARY.

Ver. 149. "*But sometimes virtue starves, while vice is fed.*"] III. The Poet, having dispatched these two species of murmurers, comes now to the third, and still more pardonable sort, the *discontented* GOOD MEN, who lament only that Virtue starves, while Vice riots. To these he replies (from ver. 148 to 157.) that, admit this to be the case, yet they have no reason to complain, either of the good man's lot in particular, or of the dispensation of Providence in general. Not of the former, because Happiness, the reward of Virtue, consisteth not in externals; nor of the latter, because ill men may gain wealth by commendable industry; good men want necessaries, through indolence or ill conduct.

Ver. 157. *But grant him riches, &c.*] But as modest as this complaint seemeth at first view, the Poet next shews (from ver. 156

NOTES.

Ver. 157. *But grant him riches,*] It does by no means follow, that because he should want riches, health, and power, he should want every thing, and never know where to stop. *Warton.*

Add health, and pow'r, and every earthly thing.
"Why bounded pow'r? why private? why no king?" 160
Nay, why external for internal given?
Why is not Man a God, and earth a heaven?

COMMENTARY.

156 to 167.) that it is founded on a principle of the highest *extravagance*, which will never let the discontented good man rest, till he becomes as vain and foolish in his imagination as the very worst sort of complainers. For that when once he begins to think he wants what is his due, he will never know where to stop, while God hath any thing to give.

NOTES.

Ver. 162. *Why is not Man a God,*] The manner in which Ramsay endeavours, but in vain, to explain the doctrine of the Essay, is as follows: "Pope is far from asserting, that the present state of Man is his primitive state, and is conformable to Order. His design is to shew, that since the Fall, all is proportioned with weight, measure, and harmony, to the condition of a degraded Being, who suffers, and who deserves to suffer, and who cannot be restored but by sufferings; that physical evils are designed to cure moral evil; that the passions and the crimes of the most abandoned men are confined, directed, and governed by infinite wisdom, in such a manner as to make order emerge out of confusion, light out of darkness, and to call out innumerable advantages from the transitory inconveniences of this life; that this so gracious Providence conducts all things to its own ends, and without either causing or approving the effects of their deliberate malice; that all is ordained in the physical order, as all is free in the moral; that these two orders are connected closely without fatality, and are not subject to that necessity which renders us virtuous without merit, and vicious without crime; that we see at present but a single wheel of the magnificent machine of the universe; but a small link of the great chain; and but an insignificant part of that immense plan which will one day be unfolded. Then will God justify all the incomprehensible proceedings of his wisdom and goodness, and will vindicate himself, as Milton speaks, from the rash judgment of mortals."

But

Who ask and reason thus, will scarce conceive
God gives enough, while he has more to give:
Immense the pow'r, immense were the demand;
Say, at what part of nature will they stand? 166
What nothing earthly gives, or can destroy,
The soul's calm sunshine, and the heart-felt joy,
Is virtue's prize. A better would you fix?
Then give humility a coach and six, 170

COMMENTARY.

Ver. 167. *What nothing earthly gives, &c.*] But this is not all; the Poet sheweth next (from ver. 166 to 185.) that these demands are not only unreasonable, but in the highest degree absurd likewise. For that those very goods, if granted, would be the destruction of that virtue for which they are demanded as a reward. He concludes, therefore, on the whole, that

"What nothing earthly gives, or can destroy,
The soul's calm sunshine, and the heart-felt joy,
Is virtue's prize——"

And that to aim at other, which not only is of no use to us here, but, what is more, will be of none hereafter, is a passion like that of an infant or a savage; where the one is impatient for what he will soon despise; and the other makes a provision for what he can never want.

NOTES.

But there are too many passages in this Essay to suffer us to admit of the forced interpretation here given by Ramsay. *Warton.*

If Ramsay has in the foregoing passage carried his ideas somewhat too far, he has marked the intention and characterized the work of Pope much more accurately than Warton, who, like all those who represent it as favourable to *infidel principles*, has laid a stress on *particular passages* which they were never intended to bear; and by separating them from the rest, reminds us of a person who cuts out a corner of a picture, as a specimen from which we are desired to judge of the whole.

Ver. 170. *Then give humility*] In a work of so serious and severe a cast, in a work of reasoning, in a work of theology, designed to explain the most interesting subject that can employ the mind

Justice a conqueror's sword, or truth a gown,
Or public spirit its great cure, a crown.
Weak, foolish Man! will heaven reward us there
With the same trash mad mortals wish for here?
The boy and man an individual makes,
Yet sigh'st thou now for apples and for cakes?
Go, like the Indian, in another life
Expect thy dog, thy bottle, and thy wife,

NOTES.

mind of man, surely such strokes of levity, of satire, of ridicule, as also lines 204, 223, 276, however poignant and witty, are ill placed and disgusting, are violations of that propriety which Pope in general so strictly observed. Lucretius preserves throughout the dignity he at first assumed; even his sarcasms and irony on the superstitious have something august, and a noble haughtiness in them; as in particular where he asks, "How it comes to pass that Jupiter sometimes strikes his own temples with his thunderbolts; whether he employs himself in casting them in the deserts for the sake of exercising his arm; and why he hurls them in places where he cannot strike the guilty.

——"Tum fulmina mittat; et ædes
Sæpe suas disturbet; et in deserta recedens
Sæviat, exercens telum, quod sæpe nocentes
Præterit, exanimatque indignos, inque merentes."

He has turned the insult into a magnificent image. *Warton.*

In answer to the foregoing observations of Dr. Warton, the reader may consult Warburton's note on Ep. ii. ver. 31. of this Essay.

Ver. 173. *Weak, foolish Man!*] These eight succeeding lines were not in former editions; and indeed none of them, especially lines 177 and 179, do any credit to the author, and rather make us wish they had been suppressed. *Warton.*

Ver. 177. *Go, like the Indian, &c.*] Alluding to the example of the

VARIATIONS.

After Ver. 172. in the MS.

Say, what rewards this idle world imparts,
Or fit for searching heads or honest hearts. *Warburton.*

As well as dream such trifles are assign'd,
As toys and empires, for a god-like mind:
Rewards, that either would to virtue bring
No joy, or be destructive of the thing.
How oft by these at sixty are undone
The virtues of a saint at twenty-one!
To whom can riches give repute, or trust,
Content, or pleasure, but the good and just?

COMMENTARY.

Ver. 185. *To whom can riches give repute, or trust,*] The Poet now enters more at large upon the matter; and still continuing his discourse to this third sort of complainers (whom he indulgeth, as much more pardonable than the first or second, in rectifying all their doubts and mistakes), he proves, both from reason and example, how unable any of those things are, which the world most admires, to make a good man happy. For as to the Philosophic mistakes concerning happiness, there being little danger of their making a general impression, he had, after a short confutation, dismissed them altogether. But external goods are those Syrens, which so bewitch the world with dreams of happiness, that it is of all things the most difficult to awaken it out of its delusions; though, as he proves in an exact review of the most pretending, they dishonour bad men, and add no lustre to the good. That it is only this third, and least criminal sort of complainers, against whom the remaining part of the discourse is directed, appeareth from the Poet's so frequently addressing himself, henceforward, to his friend.

I. He beginneth therefore (from ver. 184 to 205.) with considering RICHES. 1. He examines first, what there is of real use or enjoyment

NOTES.

the Indian, in Epist. i. ver. 99, which shews, that that example was not given to discredit any rational hopes of future happiness, but only to reprove the folly of separating them from Charity: as when

" —— Zeal, not Charity, became the guide,
And hell was built on spite, and heaven on pride."

Warburton.

Judges and senates have been bought for gold;
Esteem and love were never to be sold.
Oh fool! to think God hates the worthy mind,
The lover and the love of human-kind, 190

COMMENTARY.

enjoyment in them; and sheweth, they can give the good man only that very contentment in himself, and that very esteem and love from others, which he had before; and scornfully cries out to those of a different opinion:

" Oh fool! to think God hates the worthy mind,
The *lover* and the *love* of human-kind,
Whose life is healthful, and whose conscience clear,
Because he wants a thousand pounds a year!"

2. He next examines the imaginary value of riches, as the fountain of honour. For the objection of his adversaries standeth thus:—As *honour* is the genuine claim of virtue; and *shame* the just retribution of vice; and as honour, in their opinion, follows riches, and shame, poverty; therefore the good man should be *rich*. He tells them in this they are much mistaken:

" Honour and shame from no condition rise;
Act well your part; there all the honour lies."

What power then has Fortune over the Man? None at all; for as her favours can confer neither worth nor wisdom; so neither can her displeasure cure him of any of his follies. On his *garb*, indeed, she hath some little influence; but his *heart* still remains the same:

" Fortune in men has some small difference made;
One *flaunts* in rags, one *flutters* in brocade."

So that this difference extends no further than to the habit; the pride of heart is the same both in the *flaunter* and the *flutterer*; as it is the Poet's intention to insinuate by the use of those terms.

NOTES.

Ver. 189. *God hates the worthy mind,*] The ground of the complaint is, not that the worthy man does not possess a large and ample fortune, but because he sometimes wants even necessaries. *Warton.*

Whose life is healthful, and whose conscience clear,
Because he wants a thousand pounds a year.
Honour and shame from no condition rise;
Act well your part; there all the honour lies.
Fortune in men has some small difference made;
One flaunts in rags, one flutters in brocade;

NOTES.

Ver. 194. *Act well your part;*] The Ancients were very fond of this comparison of human life with a drama. Epictetus uses it in a well-known passage, chapter 27. and Arrian also recites it; it is repeated twice or thrice in Stobæus; and Antoninus finishes his meditations with an allusion to it. Ivie has given it from Epictetus in a manner so truly Horatian, that I cannot forbear repeating it:

"Nos sumus in scenâ; quin et mandante magistro,
Quisque datas agimus partes; sit longa brevisve
Fabula, nil refert: Tyrio seu dives in ostro
Incedam, pannis seu veler squallidus, imo
Prognatus populo, seu fracto crure humerove
In triviis rogitem æra; placet lex"——

But our author found the same illustration in his friend's Essay. See Bolingbroke, vol. v. p. 79. "The whole world, nay, the whole universe is filled with Beings, which are all connected in one immense design. The sensitive inhabitants of our globe, like the dramatis personæ, have different characters, and are applied to different purposes of action in every scene. The several parts of the material world, like the machines of a theatre, were contrived not for the actors, but for the action: and the whole order and system of the drama would be disordered and spoiled, if any alteration was made in either. The nature of every creature, his manner of being, is adapted to his state here, to the place he is to inhabit, and, as we may say, to the part he is to act. If man was a creature inferior or superior to what he is, he would be a very preposterous creature in this system. Gulliver's horses made a very absurd figure in the place of men, and men would make one as absurd in the place of horses. I do not think that philo-

sophers

The cobbler apron'd, and the parson gown'd,
The friar hooded, and the monarch crown'd.
" What differ more (you cry) than crown and cowl?"
I'll tell you, friend! a wise man and a fool.
You'll find, if once the monarch acts the monk,
Or, cobbler-like, the parson will be drunk,
Worth makes the man, and want of it the fellow;
The rest is all but leather or prunella.
Stuck o'er with titles, and hung round with strings,
That thou may'st be by kings, or whores of kings;

COMMENTARY.

Ver. 205. *Stuck o'er with titles, &c.*] II. Then, as to NOBILITY, by creation or birth; this too the Poet shews (from ver. 204 to 217.) is in itself as devoid of all real worth as the rest; because, in

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sophers have shewn in every instance why every thing is what it is, and as it is, or that nothing could be, in any one case, otherwise than it is, without producing a greater inconveniency to the whole than the particular inconveniency that would be removed. But I am sure this has been proved in so many instances, that it is trifling, as well as profane, to deny it in any. We complain often of our senses, and sometimes of our reasoning faculties: both are defective, weak, fallible: and yet if the former were more extensive, more acute, and more nice, they would not answer the purposes of human life, they would be absolutely inconsistent with them. Just so, if our reasoning faculties were more perfect than they are, the order of intellectual Beings would be broken unnecessarily, and man would be raised above his proper form, without any real advantage to himself, since the reason he has is sufficient for him in the state allotted to him; and since higher faculties and greater degrees of knowledge would on one hand increase his presumption, and yet on the other would rather excite than sate his curiosity, by shewing him more clearly the extent of his ignorance." *Warton.*

Boast the pure blood of an illustrious race,
In quiet flow from Lucrece to Lucrece;
But by your fathers' worth if yours you rate,
Count me those only who were good and great.
Go! if your ancient, but ignoble blood
Has crept through scoundrels ever since the flood,
Go! and pretend your family is young;
Nor own your fathers have been fools so long.
What can ennoble sots, or slaves, or cowards?
Alas! not all the blood of all the HOWARDS.
Look next on greatness; say where greatness lies?
"Where, but among the heroes and the wise?"

COMMENTARY.

in the first case, the honour is generally gained by no merit at all; in the second, by the merit of the first founder of the family; which, when well considered, is generally the subject rather of humiliation than of glory.

Ver. 217. *Look next on greatness; &c.*] III. The Poet now unmasks (from ver. 216 to 237.) the false pretences of GREATNESS, whereby it is seen that the *Hero* and the *Politician* (the two characters which would monopolize that quality) do, after all their bustle

NOTES.

Ver. 208. *from Lucrece to Lucrece;*] from Boileau:
"Et si leur sang tout pur, ainsi que leur noblesse,
Est passé jusq'à vous de Lucrèce en Lucrèce."
Warton.

VARIATIONS.

Ver. 207. *Boast the pure blood, &c.*] In the MS. thus:
The richest blood, right-honourably old,
Down from Lucretia to Lucretia roll'd,
May swell thy heart and gallop in thy breast,
Without one dash of usher or of priest:
Thy pride as much despise all other pride
As Christ Church once all colleges beside. *Warburton.*

Heroes are much the same, the point's agreed,
From Macedonia's madman to the Swede; 220

COMMENTARY.

bustle, if they want virtue, effect only this, that the one proves himself a fool, and the other a knave: and virtue they but too generally want; the art of heroism being understood to consist in ravage and desolation; and the art of politics, in circumvention.

It is not success, therefore, that constitutes true greatness; but the end aimed at, and the means which are employed. And if these be right, glory will follow as the reward, whatever happens to be the issue:

"Who noble ends by noble means obtains,
Or failing, smiles in exile or in chains,
Like good Aurelius let him reign, or bleed
Like Socrates, that man is great indeed."

NOTES.

Ver. 220. *From Macedonia's*] He has fallen into the common cant about Alexander the Great. Think of the scene in Darius's tent; of the foundation of the city of Alexandria, and the extent of its commerce; of the many colonies he established; of his refusing to treat the Persians as slaves; of the grief expressed by the Persians at his death; of the encouragement he gave to arts, both useful and elegant; and of his assistance to Aristotle his master, in making experiments and promoting science. The encomiums bestowed on him by two such judges of men as Bacon and Montesquieu, outweigh the censures of Boileau and Pope. Charles XII. deserved not to be joined with him: Charles XII. tore out the leaf in which Boileau had censured Alexander. Robertson, in his Disquisitions on India, has given a fine and comprehensive view of the very grand design which Alexander had formed to annex that extensive and opulent country to his empire. Section 1. Appendix. *Warton.*

See also the truly amiable and learned Dr. Vincent's Dissertation on the voyage of Nearchus. There are, however, some indelible shades in Alexander's character, which nothing can soften; such as his conduct to the Tyrians, and those who bravely opposed him in India. His political wisdom was undoubted; his *kindness* and his *cruelty* were, I fear, alike capricious. *Bowles.*

The whole strange purpose of their lives, to find
Or make, an enemy of all mankind!
Not one looks backward, onward still he goes,
Yet ne'er looks forward further than his nose.
No less alike the politic and wise;
All sly slow things, with circumspective eyes:
Men in their loose unguarded hours they take,
Not that themselves are wise, but others weak.
But grant that those can conquer, these can cheat,
'Tis phrase absurd to call a villain great:
Who wickedly is wise, or madly brave,
Is but the more a fool, the more a knave.
Who noble ends by noble means obtains,
Or failing, smiles in exile or in chains,
Like good Aurelius let him reign, or bleed
Like Socrates, that man is great indeed.
What's fame? a fancied life in others' breath,
A thing beyond us, ev'n before our death.

NOTES.

Ver. 222. *an enemy of all mankind!*] Had all nations, with regard to their heroes, been of the humour with the Normans, who called Robert II., the greatest of their Dukes, by the name of ROBERT THE DEVIL, the races of heroes might have been less numerous, or, however, less mischievous. *Warburton.*

Ver. 235. *or bleed like Socrates,*] Considering the manner in which Socrates was put to death, the word "bleed" seems to be improperly used. Cudworth has remarked, that it is a common mistake to assert that Socrates was condemned for asserting the doctrine of one Supreme Deity; for he also acknowledged the existence of inferior created gods; but he was punished for exposing and ridiculing the common fabulous poetic accounts of these inferior and subordinate gods, which accounts were held sacred by the people. It was hence he was accused of impiety. *Warton.*

Ver. 237. *What's fame?*] Perhaps our author, in these fine lines,

Just what you hear, you have, and what's unknown
The same (my Lord) if Tully's or your own.
All that we feel of it begins and ends
In the small circle of our foes or friends;
To all beside as much an empty shade
An Eugene living, as a Cæsar dead:
Alike or when, or where, they shone, or shine,
Or on the Rubicon, or on the Rhine.
A wit's a feather, and a chief a rod;
An honest man's the noblest work of God.

COMMENTARY.

Ver. 237. *What's fame?*] IV. With regard to FAME, that still more fantastic blessing, he sheweth (from ver. 236 to 259.) that all of it, besides what we hear ourselves, is merely nothing; and that, even of this small portion, no more of it giveth the possessor a real satisfaction, than what is the fruit of virtue. Thus he shews, that honour, nobility, greatness, glory, so far as they have any thing real and substantial, that is, so far as they contribute to the happiness of the possessor, are the sole issue of Virtue; and that neither riches, courts, armies, nor the populace, are capable of conferring them.

NOTES.

lines, has carried the matter too far, as Mr. Wollaston has certainly done: "The man is not known ever the more to posterity, because his name is transmitted to them. He doth not live because his name does. Since Pompey is as little known as Cæsar, all that is said of their conquests amounts to this, Somebody conquered somebody." The reader may be highly gratified if he will peruse a very fine speech on this subject, in a poem too much neglected, the Paradise Regained of Milton, book iii. v. 45. Is exposing and depreciating the passion for fame consistent with the doctrine before advanced, that

"Not a vanity is given in vain?" *Warton.*

Ver. 248. *An honest man's*] Plato says, Πάντων ἱερώτατον ἐστιν ἄνθρωπος ὁ ἀγαθός. *Warton.*

Fame but from death a villain's name can save,
As justice tears his body from the grave;
When what t' oblivion better were resign'd,
Is hung on high, to poison half mankind.
All fame is foreign, but of true desert;
Plays round the head, but comes not to the heart:
One self-approving hour whole years outweighs
Of stupid starers and of loud huzzas;
And more true joy Marcellus exil'd feels,
Than Cæsar with a senate at his heels.
  In parts superior what advantage lies?
Tell (for you can) what is it to be wise?
'Tis but to know how little can be known;
To see all others' faults, and feel our own:

COMMENTARY.

Ver. 259. *In parts superior what advantage lies?*] V. But lastly, the Poet shews (from ver. 258 to 269.) that as *no external* goods can make man happy, so neither is it in the power of *all internal*. For that even SUPERIOR PARTS bring no more real happiness to the possessor than the rest; nay, that they put him into a worse condition; for that the quickness of apprehension and depth of penetration do but sharpen the miseries of life.

NOTES.

Ver. 257. *Marcellus exil'd*] Cicero's fine oration to Cæsar on behalf of Marcellus, is sufficiently known. Middleton has given an elegant account of his enmity to Cæsar, and of his being stabbed by Magius, and his funeral rites at Athens, vol. ii. 286. By Marcellus, Pope was said to mean the Duke of Ormond. *Warton.*

Ver. 259. *In parts superior*] To a person that was praising Dr. Balguy's admirable Discourses on the Vanity and Vexation of our Pursuits after Knowledge, he replied, "I borrowed the whole from ten lines of the Essay on Man, at ver. 259; and I only enlarged and commented upon what the Poet had expressed with such marvellous conciseness, penetration, and precision." He particularly admired verse 266. *Warton.*

Condemn'd in business or in arts to drudge,
Without a second, or without a judge.
Truths would you teach, or save a sinking land? 265
All fear, none aid you, and few understand.
Painful pre-eminence! yourself to view
Above life's weakness, and its comforts too.
Bring then these blessings to a strict account;
Make fair deductions; see to what they mount; 270

COMMENTARY.

Ver. 269. *Bring then these blessings to a strict account; &c.*] Having thus proved how empty and unsatisfactory all these greatest external goods are, from an examination of their nature; he proceeds to strengthen his argument (from ver. 268 to 309.) by these three further considerations:

1. That the acquirement of these goods is made with the loss of one another, or of greater; either as inconsistent with them, or as spent in attaining them.

2. That the possessors of each of these goods are generally such, as are so far from raising envy in a good man, that he would refuse to take their persons, though accompanied with their possessions: and this the Poet illustrates by examples.

3. That even the possession of them all together, where they have excluded virtue, only terminates in more enormous misery.

NOTES.

Ver. 266. *All fear, none aid you,*] "A persecuted man of genius," says a certain celebrated wit, "is like a flying-fish; if he rises above the surface of the water, the birds seize and devour him; if he plunges down, the fishes eat him." *Warton.*

Ver. 267. *Painful pre-eminence, &c.*] This, to his friend,—nor does it at all contradict what he had said to him concerning Happiness, in the beginning of the Epistle:

"Tis never to be bought, but always free,
And fled from monarchs, St. John! dwells with thee."

For there he compliments his *virtue;* here he estimates the value of his *politics*, which he calls *wisdom.* He is now proving that nothing either external to man, or what is not in man's power, and of his own acquirement, can make him happy here. The most plausible

How much of other each is sure to cost;
How each for other oft is wholly lost;
How inconsistent greater goods with these;
How sometimes life is risk'd, and always ease.
Think, and if still the things thy envy call,
Say, would'st thou be the man to whom they fall?
To sigh for ribbands if thou art so silly,
Mark how they grace Lord Umbra, or Sir Billy.
Is yellow dirt the passion of thy life?
Look but on Gripus, or on Gripus' wife.
If parts allure thee, think how Bacon shin'd
The wisest, brightest, meanest of mankind:
Or ravish'd with the whistling of a name,
See Cromwell, damn'd to everlasting fame!

NOTES.

plausible rival of virtue is human wisdom: yet even this is so far from giving any degree of real happiness, that it deprives us of those common comforts of life, which are a kind of support, under the want of happiness. Such as the more innocent of those delusions which he speaks of in the second Epistle,

" Those painted clouds that beautify our days," &c.

Now knowledge destroyeth all those comforts, by setting man above life's weaknesses: so that in him, who thinketh to attain happiness by knowledge alone, independent of virtue, the fable is reversed, and in a preposterous attempt to gain the substance, he loseth even the shadow. This I take to be the sense of this fine stroke of satire on the wrong pursuits after happiness. *Warburton.*

Ver. 279. *Is yellow dirt*] A depreciating term, like the " concisum argentum in titulos" of Juvenal. *Warton.*

Ver. 281. 283. *If parts allure thee,—*
Or ravish'd with the whistling of a name,]

These two instances are chosen with great judgment. The world, perhaps, doth not afford two such other.

Bacon discovered and laid down those true principles of Science, by whose assistance Newton was enabled to unfold the whole law of Nature. He was no less eminent for the creative power of his imagination,

If all, united, thy ambition call,
From ancient story learn to scorn them all.
There, in the rich, the honour'd, fam'd, and great,
See the false scale of happiness complete!
In hearts of kings, or arms of queens who lay,
How happy those to ruin, these betray.

NOTES.

imagination, the brightness of his conceptions, and the force of his expression: yet being convicted on his own confession for bribery and corruption in the administration of justice, while he presided in the supreme Court of Equity, he endeavoured to repair his ruined fortunes by the most profligate flattery to the Court: which, indeed, from his very first entrance into it, he had accustomed himself to practise with a prostitution that disgraceth the very profession of letters or of science.

CROMWELL seemeth to be distinguished in the most eminent manner, with regard to his abilities, from all other great and wicked men, who have overturned the liberties of their country. The times in which others have succeeded in this attempt, were such as saw the spirit of liberty suppressed and stifled by a general luxury and venality; but Cromwell subdued his country, when this spirit was at its height, by a successful struggle against court-oppression; and while it was conducted and supported by a set of the greatest geniuses for government the world ever saw embarked together in one common cause. *Warburton.*

Ver. 283. *Or ravish'd with the whistling of a name,*] And even this fantastic glory sometimes suffers a terrible reverse. *Sacheverel,* in his *Voyage to Icolm-kill,* describing the Church there, tells us, that "in one corner is a peculiar inclosure, in which were the monuments of the kings of many different nations, as Scotland, Ireland, Norway, and the *Isle of Man.* THIS (said the person who shewed me the place, pointing to a plain stone) was the monument of the GREAT TEAGUE, king of Ireland. I had never heard of him, and could not but reflect of how little value is *greatness,* that has barely left a *name* scandalous to a nation, and a grave which the meanest of mankind would never envy." *Warburton.*

Ver. 283. *the whistling of a name,*] From Cowley in his imitation of Virgil:

"Charm'd with the foolish whistlings of a name." *Warton.*

Mark by what wretched steps their glory grows,
From dirt and sea-weed as proud Venice rose;
In each how guilt and greatness equal ran,
And all that rais'd the hero, sunk the man.
Now Europe's laurels on their brows behold,
But stain'd with blood, or ill exchang'd for gold:
Then see them broke with toils, or sunk in ease,
Or infamous for plunder'd provinces.
Oh wealth ill-fated! which no act of fame
E'er taught to shine, or sanctified from shame!
What greater bliss attends their close of life?
Some greedy minion, or imperious wife,
The trophied arches, storied halls invade,
And haunt their slumbers in the pompous shade.

NOTES.

Ver. 297. *or sunk in ease,*] In the MSS. it was thus:

——— or sunk in years,
Lost in unmeaning, unrepenting tears.

Meaning the great Duke of Marlborough, who sunk in the latter part of his life into a state of perfect childhood and dotage; as did Lord Somers. Our author always spoke of the Duke with a wonderful degree of acrimony; nay, he once turned into ridicule his sorrow on the death of his only son, the Marquis of Blandford. The Duke having a very effeminate voice, Pope, in some bitter verses which he suppressed, made him lament his loss,

" In accents of a whining ghost!" *Warton.*

Ver. 299. *Oh wealth ill-fated!*] In the journal written to his Stella, Swift speaks in very handsome terms of the Duke of Marlborough, and this too at a time when the Ministry was about to be changed, 1710. And Bolingbroke always mentioned him with respect. *Warton.*

In Swift's "History of the four last years of the Queen," may be found a character of the Duke of Marlborough, more sarcastic and acrimonious, if possible, than that contained in the above lines of Pope. Vide *Swift's Works, vol.* v. *p.* 173, *Sir W. Scott's ed.*

Alas! not dazzled with their noon-tide ray,
Compute the morn and ev'ning to the day!
The whole amount of that enormous fame,
A tale, that blends their glory with their shame!
Know then this truth (enough for Man to know)
"Virtue alone is happiness below."
The only point where human bliss stands still,
And tastes the good without the fall to ill;

COMMENTARY.

Ver. 309. *Know then this truth, &c.*] Having thus at length shewn that Happiness consists neither in external goods of *any* kind, nor in *all* kinds of internal (that is, in such of them as are not of our own acquirement), nor yet in the visionary pursuits of the Philosophers, he concludes (from ver. 308 to 311.) that it is to be found in VIRTUE ALONE.

Ver. 311. *The only point where human bliss stands still, &c.*] Hitherto the Poet had proved, NEGATIVELY, that happiness consists in virtue, by shewing, that it did not consist in any thing else

NOTES.

Ver. 309. *Know then this truth (enough for Man to know)*
"Virtue alone is happiness below."]

M. Du Resnel translates the lines thus:

"Appren donc, qu'il n'est point ici bas de *bonheur*,
Si la vertu ne régle et l'esprit et le cœur.

i. e. *Learn then, that there is no happiness here below, unless virtue regulates the heart and the understanding:* which destroys all the force of his author's conclusion. He had proved, that happiness consists neither in external goods, as the vulgar imagined, nor yet in the visions of the philosophers: he concludes therefore, that it consists in VIRTUE ALONE. His Translator says, that *without Virtue, there can be no happiness.* And so say the men whom his author is here confuting. For though they supposed *external* goods requisite to happiness, it was when in conjunction with virtue. Mr. Pope says,

"VIRTUE ALONE is happiness below:"

And so ought a faithful translator to have said after him.

Warburton.

Where only merit constant pay receives,
Is blest in what it takes, and what it gives;
The joy unequall'd, if its end it gain,
And if it lose, attended with no pain:
Without satiety, though e'er so bless'd,
And but more relish'd as the more distress'd:
The broadest mirth unfeeling folly wears,
Less pleasing far than virtue's very tears:
Good, from each object, from each place acquir'd,
For ever exercis'd, yet never tir'd;
Never elated, while one man's oppress'd;
Never dejected, while another's bless'd;

COMMENTARY.

else. He now (from ver. 310 to 327.) proves the same POSITIVELY, by an enumeration of the qualities of virtue, all naturally adapted to give and to increase human happiness; as its constancy, capacity, vigour, efficacy, activity, moderation, and self-sufficiency.

NOTES.

Ver. 319. *The broadest mirth*] It is singular that this uncommon expression, broad mirth, should be in Origen. Not that we are to imagine that Pope had read it in this Greek father. There are many such coincidences, which must not be attributed to copying or borrowing. The words in Origen are, γελωτα πλατυν οφλησομεν. *Warton.*

VARIATIONS.

After Ver. 316. in the MS.

Ev'n while it seems unequal to dispose,
And chequers all the good man's joys with woes,
'Tis but to teach him to support each state,
With patience this, with moderation that;
And raise his base on that one solid joy,
Which conscience gives, and nothing can destroy.

These lines are extremely finished. In which there is such a soothing sweetness in the melancholy harmony of the versification, as if the Poet was then in that tender office in which he was most officious, and in which all his soul came out, the condoling with some good man in affliction. *Warburton.*

And where no wants, no wishes can remain,
Since but to wish more virtue, is to gain.
See the sole bliss heaven could on all bestow!
Which who but feels can taste, but thinks can know:
Yet poor with fortune, and with learning blind,
The bad must miss; the good, untaught, will find;
Slave to no sect, who takes no private road,
But looks through Nature, up to Nature's God;
Pursues that chain which links th' immense design,
Joins heaven and earth, and mortal and divine;
Sees, that no Being any bliss can know,
But touches some above, and some below;
Learns from this union of the rising whole,
The first, last purpose of the human soul;
And knows where faith, law, morals, all began,
All end, in LOVE OF GOD, and LOVE OF MAN.

COMMENTARY.

Ver. 327. *See the sole bliss heaven could on all bestow!*] Having thus proved that Happiness is placed in *Virtue;* he proves next (from ver. 326 to 329.) that it is *rightly* placed there; for that then, and then only, ALL may partake of it, and ALL be capable of relishing it.

Ver. 329. *Yet poor with fortune, &c.*] The Poet then, with some indignation, observeth (from ver. 328 to 341.) that as obvious and as evident as this truth was, yet riches and false philosophy had so blinded the discernment even of improved minds, that the possessors of the first placed Happiness in externals, unsuitable to Man's nature; and the followers of the latter, in refined visions, unsuitable to his situation: while the simple-minded man, with NATURE only for his guide, found plainly in what it should be placed.

NOTES.

Ver. 332. *But looks through Nature,*] Verbatim from Bolingbroke's Letters to Pope. *Warton.*

For him alone, hope leads from goal to goal,
And opens still, and opens on his soul;

COMMENTARY.

Ver. 341. *For him alone, hope leads from goal to goal,*] But this is not all; the author shews further (from ver. 340 to 353.) that when the simple-minded man, on his first setting out in the pursuit of Truth in order to Happiness, hath had the wisdom

"To look through Nature up to Nature's God,"

(instead of adhering to any sect or party, where there was so great odds of his chusing wrong,) that then the benefit of gaining the knowledge of *God's will written in the mind*, is not confined there; for standing on this sure foundation, he is now no longer in danger of chusing wrong, amidst such diversities of Religions; but by pursuing this grand scheme of universal benevolence, in practice as well as theory, he arrives at length to the knowledge of the *revealed will of God*, which is the consummation of the system of benevolence:

"For him alone, hope leads from goal to goal,
And opens still, and opens on his soul;
Till lengthen'd on to FAITH, and unconfin'd,
It pours the bliss that fills up all the mind."

NOTES.

Ver. 341. *For him alone, hope leads from goal to goal, &c.*] PLATO, in his first book of a Republic, hath a remarkable passage to this purpose: "He whose conscience does not reproach him, has chearful *Hope* for his companion, and the support and comfort of his old age, according to Pindar. For this great Poet, O Socrates, very elegantly says, That he who leads a just and holy life has always amiable *Hope* for his companion, which fills his heart with joy, and is the support and comfort of his old age. *Hope*, the most powerful of the divinities, in governing the ever-changing and inconstant temper of mortal men." Τῷ δὲ μηδὲν ἑαυτῷ ἄδικον ξυνειδότι ἡδεῖα ἘΛΠΙΣ ἀεὶ πάρεστι, καὶ ἀγαθὴ γηροτρόφος, ὡς καὶ Πίνδαρος λέγει. Χαριέντως γάρ τοι, ὦ Σώκρατες, τῶτ' ἐκεῖνος εἶπεν, ὅτι ὃς ἂν δικαίως καὶ ὁσίως τὸν βίον διαγάγῃ, γλυκεῖά οἱ καρδίαν ἀτάλλουσα γηροτρόφος συνάορεῖ ἐλπὶς, ἃ μάλιστα θνατῶν πολύτροφον γνώμαν κυβερνᾷ. In the same manner Euripides speaks in his *Hercules furens:*

Οὗτος

Till lengthen'd on to FAITH, and unconfin'd,
It pours the bliss that fills up all the mind.
He sees, why Nature plants in Man alone
Hope of known bliss, and faith in bliss unknown:
(Nature, whose dictates to no other kind
Are given in vain, but what they seek they find;)
Wise is her present; she connects in this
His greatest virtue with his greatest bliss;
At once his own bright prospect to be blest,
And strongest motive to assist the rest.
Self-love thus push'd to social, to divine,
Gives thee to make thy neighbour's blessing thine.

COMMENTARY.

Ver. 353. *Self-love, thus push'd to social, &c.*] The Poet, in the last place, marks out (from ver. 352 to 373.) the progress of his good man's benevolence, pushed through natural religion to revealed,

NOTES.

Οὗτος δ' ἀνὴρ ἄριστος ὅστις ἐλπίσιν
Πέποιθεν αἰεί, τὸ δ' ἀπορεῖν, ἄνδρος κακῶ. Ver. 105.

"He is the good man in whose *breast hope springs eternally.* But to be *without hope in the world,* is the portion of the wicked."

Warburton.

To this we may add, he hopes, indeed, for another life, but he does not from hence infer the absolute necessity of it, in order to vindicate the justice and goodness of God. *Warton.*

I fear this remark of the good Doctor will be thought to partake too much of a cavil, particularly when it is observed that the Poet has not placed our expectations of a future state on the "*hope* of known bliss," only, but on our "*faith* in bliss unknown." The necessity of another life, in order to complete the great plan, of which we see a part only here, and to vindicate the ways of God to Man, has already been sufficiently insisted on in the course of the Essay. On the present occasion the Poet unites the deductions of philosophy with the promises of revelation. *Faith in bliss unknown,* alludes to 1 Cor. ii. 9. "Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him."

Is this too little for the boundless heart? 355
Extend it, let thy enemies have part:

COMMENTARY.

vealed, till it arrives to that height which the sacred writers describe as the very summit of Christian perfection; and shews how the progress of *human* differs from the progress of *divine* benevolence. That the divine descends from *whole* to *parts;* but that the human must rise from *individual* to *universal.* His argument for this extended benevolence is, that, as God has made a whole, whose parts have a perfect relation to, and an entire dependency on each other, Man, by extending his benevolence throughout that whole, acts in conformity to the will of his Creator; and therefore this enlargement of his affection becomes a duty. But the Poet hath not only shewn his piety in this observation, but the utmost art and address likewise in the disposition of it. The *Essay on Man* opens with exposing the murmurs and impious conclusions of foolish men against the present constitution of things: as it proceeds, it occasionally detects all those false principles and opinions, which led them to conclude thus perversely. Having now done all that was necessary in speculation, the author turns to practice; and ends his Essay with the recommendation of an acknowledged virtue, CHARITY; which, if exercised in that *extent* which conformity to the will of God requireth, would effectually prevent all complaints against the present order of Nature: such complaints being made with a total disregard to every thing but their *own private system,* and seeking remedy in the disorder, and at the expense of all the rest. This observation,

" Self-love but serves the virtuous mind to wake,"

is important. Rochefoucault, Esprit, and their coarse and wordy disciple Mandeville, had observed, that self-love was the *origin* of all those virtues which mankind most admire; and therefore foolishly supposed it was the *end* likewise: and so taught that the highest pretences to disinterestedness were only the more artful disguises of self-love. But our author, who says somewhere or other,

" Of human nature, wit its worst may write;
We all revere it in our own despite," MS.

saw, as well as they, and every body else, that the passions began in self-love; yet he understood human nature better than to imagine that they ended there. He knew that reason and religion could

Grasp the whole worlds of reason, life, and sense,
In one close system of benevolence:
Happier as kinder, in whate'er degree,
And height of bliss but height of charity.
God loves from whole to parts; but human soul
Must rise from individual to the whole.
Self-love but serves the virtuous mind to wake,
As the small pebble stirs the peaceful lake;

COMMENTARY.

could convert selfishness into its very opposite; and therefore teacheth that

"Self-love but serves the virtuous mind to wake:"

and thus hath vindicated the dignity of human nature, and the philosophic truth of the Christian doctrine.

NOTES.

Ver. 364. *As the small pebble*] It is observable that this similitude, which is to be found in Silius Italicus, l. xiii. v. 24. and also in Du Bartas, and in Shakespear's Henry VI., and also in Feltham's Resolves, hath been used twice more in the writings of our Poet; in the Temple of Fame, in the four hundred and thirty-sixth line, and in the second book of the Dunciad, at the four hundred and fifth. This Essay is not decorated with many comparisons; two, however, ought to be mentioned, on account of their aptness and propriety. The first is, where he compares man to the vine, that gains its strength from the embrace it gives. The second is conceived with peculiar felicity; all Nature does not perhaps afford so fit and close an application. It is observed above, in Ep. iii. ver. 313, from whence it is borrowed:

"On their own axis as the planets run,
Yet make at once their circle round the sun:
So two consistent motions act the soul;
And one regards itself, and one the whole."

This simile bears a close resemblance to that in the first act of the tragedy of Cato. *Warton.*

Dr. Warton has not observed, that Pope took the simile of the Lake, from Chaucer, whose "House of Fame" he had imitated. The simile is:

The centre mov'd, a circle straight succeeds,
Another still, and still another spreads;
Friend, parent, neighbour, first it will embrace;
His country next; and next all human race;
Wide, and more wide, th' o'erflowings of the mind
Take every creature in, of every kind;
Earth smiles around, with boundless bounty blest,
And heaven beholds its image in his breast.
Come then, my Friend! my Genius! come along;
Oh master of the poet, and the song!

NOTES.

——" Takith hede nowe
By experience, for if that thou
Throwe in a watir nowe a stone,
Well woste thou it will make anone
A lityl roundil as a circle,
Para'venture as brode as covircle;
And right anon thou shallte se wele,
That circle cause another whele;
And that the thirde, and so forthe, brother,
Eviry circle causing other,
Moch brodir than himselfin was:
And thus from roundil to compas
Eche about in othir goinge,
Ycausith of othirs steringe,
And multiplying evirmo,
Tyl that it be so far ygo,
That it at both brinkis be," &c. Book ii. v. 280.
Bowles.

VARIATIONS.

Ver. 373. *Come then, my Friend! &c.*] In the MS. thus:
And now transported o'er so vast a plain,
While the wing'd courser flies with all her rein,
While heav'n-ward now her mounting wing she feels,
Now scatter'd fools fly trembling from her heels,
Wilt thou, my ST. JOHN! keep her course in sight,
Confine her fury, and assist her flight? *Warburton.*

And while the Muse now stoops, or now ascends,
To Man's low passions, or their glorious ends,
Teach me, like thee, in various nature wise,
To fall with dignity, with temper rise;
Form'd by thy converse, happily to steer
From grave to gay, from lively to severe;
Correct with spirit, eloquent with ease,
Intent to reason, or polite to please.
Oh! while along the stream of time thy name
Expanded flies, and gathers all its fame,
Say, shall my little bark attendant sail,
Pursue the triumph, and partake the gale?
When statesmen, heroes, kings, in dust repose,
Whose sons shall blush their fathers were thy foes,
Shall then this verse to future age pretend
Thou wert my guide, philosopher, and friend? 390
That urg'd by thee, I turn'd the tuneful art
From sounds to things, from fancy to the heart;

NOTES.

Ver. 391. *I turn'd the tuneful art*] Ought the lovers of true genuine poetry to be obliged to his friend, for being instrumental in making Pope forsake works of imagination for the didactic? Which of the two species of composition may be the more useful and instructive, is entirely beside the question; but, in point of poetic genius, the Rape of the Lock, and the Eloisa, as far excel the Essay on Man, and the Moral Epistles, as the Gierusalemme, so unjustly depreciated by Boileau, does all his Satires and his Art of Poetry; and as the second and fourth books of Virgil excel the Georgics. To be able to reason well in verse, is not the first, nor the most essential talent of a poet, great as its merit may be. *Warton.*

It is impossible to assent to these remarks which confine poetic genius to certain subjects, that are supposed more capable of displaying

For wit's false mirror held up Nature's light;
Shew'd erring pride, WHATEVER IS, IS RIGHT;

COMMENTARY.

Ver. 394. *Shew'd erring pride*, WHATEVER IS, IS RIGHT;] The Poet's address to his friend, which concludeth this Epistle so nobly, and endeth with a recapitulation of the general argument, affords me the following observation, with which I shall conclude these remarks. There is one great beauty that shines through the whole *Essay*. The Poet, whether he speaks of Man as an individual, a member of Society, or the subject of Happiness, never misseth an opportunity, while he is explaining his state under any of these capacities, to illustrate it in the most artful manner by the enforcement of his grand principle, *That every thing tendeth to the good of the whole;* from whence his system gaineth the reciprocal advantage of having that grand theorem realized by facts; and his facts justified on a principle of right or nature.

THUS

NOTES.

playing it than others, and absurdly consider the same writer as possessed of a different degree of genius according to the subject on which he employs himself. Genius consists in giving to every subject the illustration it requires; to a light and airy subject the ornaments of fancy; to an impassioned subject the impulse of feeling; to a didactic, grave, or argumentative subject, the force of conviction; but the decorations of *poetry* are incident to them all, and in proportion as these are employed, any one of them may be rendered *more poetical* than another. The Essay on Man is not intended to delight the imagination, or to excite our passions, but to influence the judgment and to touch the heart, and the means adopted for that purpose display as much *genius* as is exhibited for other purposes in other parts of the author's works. In sublimity of conception, grandeur and energy of expression, beauty of imagery, and propriety of illustration, the Essay on Man is, perhaps, not exceeded by any other production of the author, however poetical the subject may be supposed to be, and is itself an irrefragable proof that the poetry consists not in the subject, (for what could have been conceived more dry and unpoetical than such an essay?) but *on the genius with which it is treated.*

That REASON, PASSION, answer one great aim; 395
That true SELF-LOVE and SOCIAL are the same;

COMMENTARY.

THUS I have endeavoured to analyse and explain the exact reasoning of these four Epistles. Enough, I presume, to convince every one, that it hath a precision, force, and closeness of connexion rarely to be met with, even in the most formal treatises of philosophy. Yet in doing this, it is but too evident I have destroyed that grace and energy which animates the original. And now let the reader believe, if he be so disposed, what M. de Crousaz, in his critique upon this work, insinuates to be his own opinion, as well as that of his friends: "Some persons," says he, "have conjectured, that Mr. Pope did not compose this Essay at once, and in a regular order; but that after he had written several fragments of poetry, all finished in their kind, (one, for example, on the parallel between reason and instinct, another upon Man's groundless pride, another on the prerogatives of human nature, another on religion and superstition, another on the original of society, and several fragments besides on self-love and the passions,) he tacked these together as he could, and divided them into four Epistles; as, it is said, was the fortune of Homer's Rhapsodies." I suppose this extravagance will be believed just as soon of one as of the other. But M. Du Resnel, our Poet's translator, is not behind-hand with the critic, in his judgment on the work. "The only reason," says he, "for which this Poem can be properly termed an *Essay*, is, that the author has not formed his plan with all the regularity of method which it might have admitted." And again—"I was, by the unanimous opinion of all those whom I have consulted on this occasion, and, amongst these, of several *Englishmen* completely skilled in both languages, *obliged to follow a different method. The French are not satisfied with sentiments, however beautiful, unless they be methodically disposed. Method being the characteristic that distinguishes our performances from those of our neighbours*," &c. After having given many examples of the critical skill of this wonderful man of method, in the foregoing notes, it is enough just to have quoted this flourish of self-applause, and so to leave him to the laughter of the world.

That VIRTUE only makes our bliss below;
And all our knowledge is OURSELVES TO KNOW. 398

NOTES.

Ver. 398. OURSELVES TO KNOW.] Marmontel, in his Poëtique, has given the following judgment on the Essay on Man: "Pope, dans les Epitres qui composent son Essai sur l'Homme, a fait voir combien la poësie pouvoit s'élever sur les ailes de la philosophie. C'est dommage que ce Poëte n'ait pas eu autant de méthode que de profondeur. Mais il avait pris un système; il falloit le soutenir. Ce système lui offroit des difficultés epouvantables; il falloit ou les vaincre, ou les éviter: le dernier parti étoit le plus sur et le plus commode; aussi pour répondre aux plaintes de l'homme sur les malheurs de son état, lui donne-t-il le plus souvent des images pour des preuves, et des injures pour des raisons."

Still more contemptuous and degrading than the opinion of this French critic, are the terms in which Dr. Johnson has spoken of this Essay, in which are so many splendid and highly finished passages. "The subject," he says, "is perhaps not very proper for poetry; and the poet was not sufficiently master of his subject; metaphysical morality was a new study, and he was proud of his acquisitions; and, supposing himself master of great secrets, was in haste to teach what he had not learned. When these wonder-working sounds sink into sense, and the doctrine of the Essay, disrobed of its ornaments, is left to the powers of its naked excellence, what shall we discover? That we are, in comparison with our Creator, very weak and ignorant; that we do not uphold the chain of existence; and that we could not make one another with more skill than we are made. We may learn yet more; that the arts of human life were copied from the instinctive operations of other animals; that if the world be made for man, it may be said that man was made for geese."

This sort of burlesque abstract, which may be so easily but so unjustly made of any composition whatever, is exactly similar to the

VARIATIONS.

Ver. 397. *That virtue only, &c.*] In the MS. thus:

That just to find a God is all we can,
And all the study of mankind is Man. *Warburton.*

the imperfect and unfair representation, which the same critic has given of the beautiful imagery in *Il Penseroso* of Milton. Very different was the opinion of the ingenious and acute Dr. Balguy, on the Essay on Man; who, in various passages of his excellent treatise, intitled, *Divine Benevolence*, has manifestly copied many of its doctrines and reasonings; who has written two sermons on the vanity of our pursuits after knowledge, which contain, as hath been already observed, little more than is comprehended in ten lines of this Essay; and who has even done Pope the honour of prefixing to his admirable sermons, as a motto, the following sentence from the preface to this Essay: "If I could flatter myself that these Essays have any merit, it is in steering between the extremes of doctrines seemingly opposite; in passing over terms utterly unintelligible; and in forming a temperate, yet not inconsistent system. *Warton.*

THE most substantial objection that can perhaps be made against the Essay on Man, as well as against some other parts of the author's writings, is, that it tends to inculcate too low an opinion of the powers of the human intellect, and too implicit a submission to certain pre-assumed truths; as if it were presumptuous to extend our inquiries, with respect to either natural or moral knowledge, beyond certain established limits. This peculiarity has perhaps justly subjected the author to the animadversion of Mr. Dugald Stewart; who, in reference to the lines:

"Admir'd such wisdom in an earthly shape,
And shew'd a Newton as we shew an ape:"

has observed that, "they could not possibly have been written by any person impressed with a due veneration for the glory of his species." Although it must at the same time be observed, in justice to the poet, that such superior beings are represented as *admiring the wisdom*, not *ridiculing the presumption*, of the object of their remark.

In fact, the tendency of the whole passage, from the beginning of the second Epistle to the 52d verse, is to induce us to confine our researches within, and not presumptuously to expend our powers on such subjects, as are supposed by the poet to be beyond, the comprehension of the human intellect:

"Trace

" Trace science then, with modesty thy guide," &c.

These sentiments were not only expressed by Pope in his works, but were the principles upon which he acted through life, and which essentially contributed to the formation of his character, and particularly in his political and religious concerns. To whatever cause this strongly marked peculiarity is to be attributed, the effect, as far as his example and precepts extend, would not, it must be owned, be favourable to the progress of knowledge, or to the true interests and happiness of the human race. To no individuals are we more indebted than to those who have pushed their inquiries, as well respecting intellectual as material existence to their fullest extent, and have thereby contributed to ascertain the true objects of human inquiry, and the true limits of the human understanding; a task of such importance that, until it can be accomplished, we shall always be in danger, not merely of wasting our powers on subjects beyond our comprehension, but of adopting false ideas and erroneous conclusions, highly unfavourable to our improvement and happiness.

The Essay on Man was translated into Latin Heroic verse by Jo. Joach. Gottlob Am Ende, of Dresden; into Italian *versi sciolti*, by the Cavaliere Anton-Filippo Adami; into French, by the Abbe Du Resnel; and into German, by Henrich Christian Kretsch. These translations were collected, and printed with the original English, by Bodoni, in an elegant quarto volume: *Parma, dalla Reale Stamperia*, 1801.

In the Italian language there are no less than six translations; two in prose, and the others in *versi sciolti;* of these, that of Adami is too diffuse and prolix; that of Castiglione is almost literally verse for verse, but totally deficient in poetical elegance; the translation of Cerretesi is more free, without being on the whole preferable; and that of Leoni, a modern Italian poet, who has lately undertaken to introduce our immortal Shakspeare to his countrymen, holds a middle place between the superfluous verbosity of the one, and the dry brevity of the others.

It cannot but be highly interesting to the admirers of Pope, to see a short specimen of the different manner in which one of the finest passages of this celebrated poem has been transferred into the beautiful language of Italy.

POPE, SAGGIO SULL' UOMO. EP. IV.

Traduzione del Cavaliere Anton-Filippo Adami. Ed. Parma, 1811.

Bella Felicità, tu sei di ogni ente
Che respira quaggiù mobile e fine;
Qual nome io potrò darti, onde ciascuno
Ti ricerchi, ti siegua e ti ravvisi?
Tranquillità, piacer, pace, dolcezza,
Un non so che ti dirò infin di grato,
Di pregevol, che ogni Uom dentro al suo cuore
Con perenne desìo chiama e sospira.
Tu sei, la cui speranza adulatrice
Porge lena e ristoro ai petti umani
Contro i colpi di morte e del destino.
Fisso e cangiante oggetto; a cui son usi
Rivolgersi a vicenda e saggi e stolti,
Conformarne ciascun quella confusa
Immagine, che a lui sembra più vera.
Tu sempre a noi vicina, in quel momento
Ch' altri crede fermarti, allor ti involi;
Pianta, che avesti origine nei cieli,
Se quì posta tra noi da man divina
Degni di possederti anco i mortali
Tu credi, addita loro in qual regione
Debbanti rintracciar, sotto qual clima.
Forse tra l'opulenza adulatrice
D' una corte con brio siedi fastosa?
Dalle di gemme e d' or ricche miniere
Forse sortisti ad abitare il mondo?
Forse sul margin di scoprirti è d' uopo
Del chiaro fiume, che il Permesso irriga,
Tra quel saper, che inebria la focosa
Immaginante fantasìa dei Vati?
O all' ombra degli allori, onde la fama
Fregiar promette il crin d' eroi guerrieri?
Qual è il regno felice, ov' hai la cuna,
O quello in cui di comparar paventi?
—Ah che qualor la nostra industria è vana

Onde tra noi Felicità germogli,
L'arte accusar si de'e, non il terreno.
Il più orribil soggiorno, il più giocondo,
Posson del pari a lei servir d'asilo.
O giammai non si gusta e non si vede,
O si trova egualmente in ogni lato.
L'oro, quel seduttore onnipotente,
Non ha sopra di lei forza ed impero;
Virtù l'attrae, del merto si compiace;
E se le spalle volge disdegnosa
Dei Regi alle pompose altere Corti,
Nel tuo soggiorno, Amico, ella si cela,
Per godervi in amabile ritiro,
Il suo stabil ricetto, il suo riposo.

Traduzione del Professore Gio. Castiglione. Strasburg, 1761, 8*vo*.

Felicitade! oh nostro scopo e fine!
Ben, contento, piacer, qual sia suo nome,
Oh, non so che di più, che traggi eterni
Sospiri; onde soffriam la vita, osiamo
Morir; sempre vicina, sempre oltre a noi;
Visto o doppio o mal noto al folle, al saggio.
Pianta celeste! Se quaggiù cadesti,
Dimmi in qual suol mortal crescerti degni?
Sbocci tu d'una corte ai rai propizj?
Sei tu in le mine colle gemme ascosta?
Sei tu d'allor febeo fra i serti intesta?
O colta nella ferrea marzial messe?
Dove cresce ella? . . . ah dove non cresce ella?
Se vana è nostra inchiesta, la coltura
S'incolpi, non il suol; fisso ad un sito
Il vero ben non è; per tutto trovasi,
O in niun loco; non è venale, è libero,
E i Re schivando, Amico, abita teco.

---

raduzione di Giuseppe Cerretesi de' Pazzi. Milano, 1756, 8*vo*.

O GRAN Felicità, lo scopo e il termine
Dell' esser nostro! Ben, piacer, e requie!
Dolce contento! e alfin qualunque siasi
Il nome tuo; quel non so che, cui suscita
I sospiri, che son nei cor perpetui;
Per la qual sopportiamo il nostro vivere,
Nè si teme il morir; sempre a noi prossima,
Ognor da noi distante; di continuo
Cercata più lontan di quel che siane;
Al savio e al pazzo oscuramente cognita;
Pianta d' un seme, ch' ha dal ciel l' origine,
Se discesa qua sei, fanne conoscere
Qual è quel suol dove ti degni crescere.
Ti mostri tu animata dai più lucidi
Raggi di qualche corte favorevole?
O sei sepolta tra metalli e gioje?
Coronato vai tu d' allor poetico,
O ti troncò d' acciar delle battaglie?
Dov' è che cresci, o dove non puoi crescere?
Quando sia mai la pena nostra inutile
E' la coltura non il suol che mancane.
Quella felicità ch' è sol veridica
In verun luogo immune non ascondesi;
Non è in niun sito, e da per tutto trovasi;
Comprarla non si può; e mentre è libera,
Lungi dai troni in *Bolimbrok* ell' abita.

Traduzione di Michele Leoni. Parma, 1819, 8*vo*.

O TU, Felicità, dell' esser nostro
Oggetto e metà! Ben, contento, gioja,
Riposo, od altro, qual che sia tuo nome;
Dell' uom sospiro eterno, onde la vita
Sopporta, e morte sfida; a noi vicina
Ognora, eppur sempre da noi rimossa;
Fuor di tua sede invan cercata, e al folle
Non men che al saggio tal, che doppia assembri;

Dimmi, deh, pianta di celeste seme,
Se quaggiu mai cadesti, in qual più eletta
Parte del mortal suol crescer ti degni?
Ridi tu forse di propizia corte
Allo splendido raggio, o colle gemme
In fiammante miniera occulta giaci?
Sei tu fra i lauri nel Parnaso avvinta,
O sulle glebe dall' acciar mietata?
Dove, dove ti stai? Se vano è il nostro
Faticar, del cultor, non del terreno
La menda è sol. Felicità sincera
Certo loco non ha; libera sempre,
Non si cambia, nè merca; e in niuna parte
Nasce, o dovunque; dai monarchi fugge,
O *Bolingbroke*, ella con te dimora.

THE

UNIVERSAL PRAYER.

DEO OPT. MAX.

THE

UNIVERSAL PRAYER.

DEO OPT. MAX.

FATHER of all! in every age,
In every clime ador'd,
By saint, by savage, and by sage,
Jehovah, Jove, or Lord!

NOTES.

UNIVERSAL PRAYER.] "Some passages in the Essay on Man having been unjustly suspected of a tendency towards Fate and Naturalism, the author composed a Prayer, as the sum of all, which was intended to shew that his system was founded in *Free-will*, and terminated in Piety." *Ruffhead.*

Ver. 1. FATHER *of all!*] For closeness and comprehension of thought, and for brevity and energy of expression, few pieces of poetry in our language can be compared with this prayer. I am surprised Johnson should not make any mention of it. When it was first published, many orthodox persons were, I remember, offended at it, and called it, The Deist's Prayer. It were to be wished the Deists would make use of so good an one. *Warton.*

Ver. 4. *Jehovah, Jove, or Lord!*] "It is of very little consequence," says Seneca, De Beneficiis, "by what name you call the first Nature, and the divine Reason, that presides over the universe, and fills all the parts of it. He is still the same God. You may give Him as many names as you please, provided you allow but one Sole Principle everywhere present."

"Notwithstanding all the extravagances and miscarriages of the Poets," says Cudworth, chap. 4. "we shall now make it plainly appear, that they really asserted, not a multitude of self-existent and independent Deities, but one, only, unmade Deity; and all the other, generated or created gods. This hath been al-

Thou Great First Cause, least understood,
  Who all my sense confin'd
To know but this, that Thou art good,
  And that myself am blind;

Yet gave me, in this dark estate,
  To see the good from ill;
And binding Nature fast in Fate,
  Left free the human will.

NOTES.

ready proved concerning Orpheus, from such fragments of the Orphic Poems as have been owned and attested by Pagan writers." Cudworth proceeds to confirm this opinion by many strong and uncontested passages from Homer, Hesiod, Pindar, Sophocles, and especially Euripides, book i. chap. iv. sect. 19; and Aristophanes, in the first line of Plutus, distinguishes betwixt Jupiter and the gods: Ω Ζεῦ καὶ θεοί. *Warton.*

Ver. 6. *my sense confin'd*] It ought to be confinedst, or didst confine; and afterwards, gavest, or didst give, in the second person. See Lowth's Grammar. *Warton.*

Ver. 9. *Yet gave me,*] Originally Pope had written another stanza, immediately after this:

" Can sins of moments claim the rod
  Of everlasting fires?
And that offend great Nature's God
  Which Nature's self inspires?"

The licentious sentiment it contains, evidently borrowed from a well-known passage of Guarini in the Pastor Fido, induced him to strike it out. And perhaps also the absurd metaphor of a rod of fires, on examination, displeased him. *Warton.*

Ver. 12. *Left free*] An absurd and impossible exemption, exclaims the Fatalist; " comparing together the moral and the natural world, every thing is as much the result of established laws in the one as in the other. There is nothing in the whole universe that can properly be called contingent: nothing loose or fluctuating in any part of Nature; but every motion in the natural, and every determination and action in the moral world, are directed by

What conscience dictates to be done,
Or warns me not to do,
This, teach me more than hell to shun,
That, more than heaven pursue.

What blessings thy free bounty gives,
Let me not cast away;
For God is paid when Man receives,
T' enjoy is to obey.

Yet not to Earth's contracted span
Thy goodness let me bound,
Or think Thee Lord alone of Man,
When thousand worlds are round:

NOTES.

by immutable laws; so that, whilst these laws remain in their force, not the smallest link of the universal chain of causes and effects can be broken, nor any one thing be otherwise than it is." All the most subtile and refined arguments that can be urged in a dispute on Fate and Free-will, are introduced, in a conversation on this subject, betwixt the angels Gabriel and Raphael, and Adam, in the fourth act of Dryden's State of Innocence, and stated with a wonderful precision and perspicuity. Reasoning in verse, was one of Dryden's most singular and predominant excellences; notwithstanding which, he must rank as a poet for his Music-ode, not for his Religio Laici. *Warton.*

Ver. 12. *the human will.*] The result of what Locke advances on this, the most difficult of all subjects, is, that we have a power of doing what we will. "If it be the occasion of disorder, it is the cause of order; of all the moral order that appears in the world. Had Liberty been excluded, Virtue had been excluded with it. And if this had been the case, the world could have had no charms, no beauties sufficient to recommend it to him who made it. In short, all other powers and perfections would have been very defective without this, which is truly the life and spirit of the whole creation." *Warton.*

Let not this weak, unknowing hand
  Presume thy bolts to throw,
And deal damnation round the land,
  On each I judge thy foe.

If I am right, thy grace impart,
  Still in the right to stay;
If I am wrong, oh teach my heart
  To find that better way!

Save me alike from foolish pride,
  Or impious discontent,
At aught thy wisdom has denied,
  Or aught thy goodness lent.

Teach me to feel another's woe,
  To hide the fault I see;
That mercy I to others show,
  That mercy show to me.

NOTES.

Ver. 27. *And deal damnation round the land, &c.*] There was no opinion that Pope held in greater abhorrence than the uncharitable doctrine, that the goodness of God was limited to any one sect; insomuch that it had been his practice from his early years to mark it with his reprobation, whenever an opportunity occurred. "There may be errors," says he, "I grant, but I cannot think them of such consequence as to destroy utterly the charity of mankind; the very greatest bond by which we are engaged by God to one another; therefore, I own to you I was glad of any opportunity to express my dislike of so shocking a sentiment, as those of the religion I profess are commonly charged with." This was written when he was about his twenty-third year, and the same sentiment is repeated in various parts of his works.

Ver. 39. *That mercy*] It has been said that our Poet, in this Prayer

Mean though I am, not wholly so,
  Since quicken'd by thy breath;
Oh lead me wheresoe'er I go,
  Through this day's life or death!

This day, be bread and peace my lot:
  All else beneath the sun,
Thou know'st if best bestow'd or not,
  And let thy will be done.

To thee, whose Temple is all space,
  Whose altar, earth, sea, skies,
One chorus let all Being raise!
  All Nature's incense rise!

NOTES.

Prayer, chose the Lord's Prayer for his model; but there is no resemblance but in this passage, and in the last stanza but one.

M. Le Franc de Pompignan, a celebrated avocat at Montauban, author of Dido, a tragedy, was severely censured in France for translating this Universal Prayer, as a piece of Deism; which, having been printed in London, in 4to. by Vaillant, was conveyed to the Chancellor Aguesseau, who immediately sent a strong reprimand to M. Le Franc, and he vindicated his orthodoxy in a laboured letter to that learned Chancellor. Voltaire reproached Le Franc with making this translation. His brother, Bishop of Puy au Velei, has called Locke an atheist. *Warton.*

MORAL ESSAYS,

IN FOUR EPISTLES:

TO SEVERAL PERSONS.

Est brevitate opus, ut currat sententia, neu se
Impediat verbis lassis onerantibus aures:
Et sermone opus est modo tristi, sæpe jocoso,
Defendente vicem modo Rhetoris atque Poetæ,
Interdum urbani, parcentis viribus, atque
Extenuantis eas consultò. *Hor.*

The ESSAY ON MAN was intended to be comprised in four books:

The *First* of which, the author has given us under that title, in four epistles:

The *Second* was to have consisted of the same number: 1. Of the extent and limits of human reason. 2. Of those arts and sciences, and the parts of them, which are useful, and therefore attainable; together with those which are unuseful, and therefore unattainable. 3. Of the nature, ends, use, and application of the different capacities of men. 4. Of the use of learning; of the science of the world; and of wit; concluding with a satire against the misapplication of them; illustrated by pictures, characters, and examples.

The *Third* book regarded civil regimen, or the science of politics; in which the several forms of a Republic were to be examined and explained; together with the several modes of religious worship, so far forth as they affect society; between which the author always supposed there was the closest connexion and the most interesting relation. So that this part would have treated of Civil and Religious Society in their full extent.

The *Fourth* and last book concerned private ethics, or practical morality; considered in all the circumstances, orders, professions, and stations of human life.

The scheme of all this had been maturely digested; and *communicated* to Lord Bolingbroke, Dr. Swift, and one or two more; and was intended for the only work of his riper years: but was, partly through ill health, partly through discouragements from the depravity of the times, and partly on prudential and other considerations, interrupted, postponed, and, lastly, in a manner laid aside.

But as this was the author's favourite work, which more exactly reflected the image of his own strong and capacious mind, and as we can have but a very imperfect idea of it from the *disjecta membra Poetæ*, which now remain; it may not be amiss to be a little more particular concerning each of these projected books.

The FIRST, as it treats of man in the abstract, and considers him in general, under every one of his relations, becomes the

foundation, and furnishes out the subjects, of the *three* following; so that

The SECOND BOOK was to take up again the *first* and *second* Epistles of the first book; and to treat of man in his intellectual capacity at large, as has been explained above. Of this, only a small part of the conclusion (which, as we said, was to have contained a satire against the misapplication of wit and learning) may be found in the *fourth* book of the *Dunciad;* and up and down, occasionally, in the other *three.*

The THIRD BOOK, in like manner, was to reassume the subject of the *third* Epistle of the *first,* which treats of Man in his social, political, and religious capacity. But this part the Poet afterwards conceived might be best executed in an EPIC POEM; as the Action would make it more animated, and the Fable less invidious; in which all the great principles of true and false Governments and Religions should be chiefly delivered in feigned examples.

The FOURTH and last book was to pursue the subject of the *fourth* Epistle of the *first,* and to treat of *Ethics,* or practical morality; and would have consisted of many members; of which, the four following Epistles are detached portions; the *two first,* on the *Characters of Men and Women,* being the *introductory* part of this concluding book. *Warburton.*

The patrons and admirers of French literature usually extol those authors of that nation who have treated of life and manners; and five of them, particularly, are esteemed to be unrivalled, namely, Montaigne, Charron, La Rochefoucault, Boileau, La Bruyère, and Pascal. These are supposed to have deeply penetrated into the most secret recesses of the human heart, and to have discovered the various vices and vanities that lurk in it. I know not why the English should in this respect yield to their polite neighbours more than in any other. Bacon in his Essays and Advancement of Learning, Hobbes and Hume in their treatises, Prior in his elegant and witty Alma, Richardson in his Clarissa, and Fielding in his Tom Jones, (comic writers are not here included,) have shewn a profound knowledge of man; and many portraits of Addison may be compared with the most finished touches of La Bruyère. But the Epistles we are now entering upon will place the matter beyond a dispute; for the French can boast of no author who has so much exhausted the science of

morals as Pope has in his five Epistles. They indeed contain all that is solid and valuable in the above-mentioned French writers, of whom our author was remarkably fond. But whatever observations he has borrowed from them, he has made his own by the dexterity of his application. *Warton.*

These Epistles, in which Poetry has condescended to become the handmaid of Philosophy, to decorate, and set her off to advantage, are written with a spirit and vivacity not exceeded by any production of the kind in any country or language. Their nearest prototypes are the Epistles of Horace and Boileau, and the Satires of Ariosto and Bentivoglio, to none of which they are inferior. In our own language they may be considered as the first attempt to unite sound sense and deep research with the lighter graces of elegant composition, and to promote the cause of virtue and morality by conveying the purest precepts in the most impressive language, and illustrating them by examples which strike the imagination with all the force of reality. As they had in this country no example, so they have as yet had no rival; nor until a genius shall arise that shall unite in himself, in an equal degree, the various endowments by which their author was distinguished, is it likely they ever will.

EPISTLE I.

OF

THE KNOWLEDGE AND CHARACTERS OF MEN:

TO

SIR RICHARD TEMPLE,

LORD VISCOUNT COBHAM.

THE object of this Epistle is to pursue still further a subject which the author had already started in the Essay on Man, and on which this may be considered as a further comment. This subject is, "THE RULING PASSION;" an idea, which although not originally his own, he seems to have delighted to expand and contemplate under every appearance of which it is capable. It is not therefore surprising that some of these views should appear inconsistent with, or contradictory to others; or that they should have led to misapprehensions which it requires some degree of attention to explain. For want of this, his true meaning has been greatly misunderstood, and he has been accused of inculcating opinions, not only doubtful and uncertain, but which, if assented to, would lead to consequences highly injurious. On this head his later Editors seem to have been agreed. "Of any passion," says Johnson, "thus innate and irresistible, the existence may reasonably be doubted. Human characters are by no means constant. Men change, by change of place, of fortune, of acquaintance. He who is at one time a lover of pleasure, is, at another, a lover of money. Those, indeed, who attain any excellence, commonly spend life in one pursuit; for excellence is not often gained upon easier terms. But to the particular species of excellence, men are directed, not by an ascendant planet or predominating humour, but by the first book which they read, some early conversation which they heard, or some accident which excited ardour and enthusiasm."

"This doctrine is in itself pernicious as well as false. Its tendency is to produce the belief of *a kind of moral predestination*, or over-ruling principle, which cannot be resisted. He that admits it, is prepared *to comply with every desire that caprice or opportunity shall excite*, and to flatter himself that he submits only to the lawful dominion of nature, in obeying *the resistless authority of his ruling passion.*" Johnson's Life of Pope.

With these opinions of Johnson, Dr. Warton, who has quoted them at length, appears to have fully coincided. Two eminent writers, says he, have attacked our author's notion of a ruling passion; Mr. Harris and Dr. Johnson. The former says, "one talks of an universal passion, as if all passions were not universal. Another talks of a ruling passion, and means, without knowing it, certain ruling opinions. Thus when specious falsehood assumes

the lyre, we are charmed with the music, and worship her as truth."—(*Warton's Edit.* vol. iii. p. 198.) Mr. Bowles thinks this "the worst of Pope's Epistles;" that it is founded upon an absurd and unphilosophical principle," and that "the whole theory is full of inconsistency."—(*Bowles's Edit.* vol. iii. p. 244.) He also observes in his Life of Pope, (p. 98.) that "what Johnson has said on the principle of this poem, the ruling passion, is most just and incontrovertible."

I trust it will not be imputed to me as the result of a determination to vindicate the author on all occasions, or of a pertinacious desire of opposing the opinions of my predecessors, when I state it to be my strong conviction, that in thus representing the doctrines of Pope in the following Epistle, they have wholly mistaken his meaning; and have accused him of giving rise to consequences which he never intended, and against which he has guarded by every precaution in his power. What is stated in this Epistle, may be considered as a supplement, or practical illustration of what he had before said in the Essay on Man; where we are told that the *ruling passion* is implanted in us at our birth, and that if we wish to understand the human character, it is indispensably necessary for us to be acquainted with the ruling passion of each individual. But that this ruling passion is so absolute and uncontrollable as "to produce the belief of a kind of moral predestination, or over-ruling principle that cannot be resisted," is no where contended. On the contrary it is represented as capable of being modified and restrained; and as frequently forming a part of, and being mixed up with other causes, on which our conduct is founded:

> "Add *nature*'s, custom's, reason's, passion's, strife,
> And all opinion's colours cast on life."
>
> Moral Essays, Ep. i. Ver. 21.

And again,

> "Judge we by *nature?* habit can efface,
> Interest o'ercome, or policy take place."
>
> Ib. Ver. 166.

Restrictions which alone are sufficient to shew, that the doctrine was never intended, by the author, to be taken in the *unlimited sense* to which Johnson has carried it.

Again, it is to be observed that Pope has not only cautiously guarded against the undue application of this principle, " to justify a compliance with every desire that caprice or opportunity shall excite," on the pretext of " submitting only to the lawful dominion of nature," but that he has considered it as the foundation of our highest virtues, and as the stock upon which it is the business of life to ingraft those fruits which are of the greatest value. This subject forms so important a part of the second Epistle of the Essay on Man, that it is astonishing it should not have occurred to his critics. After dwelling at length on the powerful effect of the ruling passion, and the difficulty there would be in the attempt to eradicate it, he not only admits that it is capable of being regulated, but directs how it is to be accomplished :

—— " Nature's road must ever be preferr'd;
Reason is here no guide, but still a guard;
'Tis hers to *rectify*, not overthrow,
And *treat this passion more as friend than foe.*"

Essay on Man, Ep. ii. ver. 161.

Not satisfied however with shewing that the ruling passion may be so moderated and controlled as to obviate its injurious effects on the character, he proceeds further, and demonstrates, that such a principle is *positively* advantageous to us (as indeed it would not otherwise have been implanted in us) and that we derive from it a consistency of character which we should otherwise have wanted:

" Th' eternal art, educing good from ill,
Grafts on this passion our best principle;
'Tis thus the mercury of man is fix'd;
Strong grows the virtue with his nature mix'd."

Essay on Man, Ep. ii. ver. 175.

And this is extended and illustrated by a passage equally poetical and correct:

" As fruits, ungrateful to the planter's care,
On savage stocks inserted, learn to bear,
The surest virtues thus from passions shoot,
Wild nature's vigour working at the root.
What crops of wit and honesty appear
From spleen, from obstinacy, hate, or fear!" &c.

Essay on Man, Ep. ii. ver. 181.

Whence it is evident that the poet considered the ruling passion

merely as the *rudder* of the mind; upon the due management and direction of which, the success and happiness of life essentially depends. This subject is further explained by Warburton in a luminous note on the Essay on Man, Ep. ii. ver. 163. which has been omitted in the editions of both Warton and Bowles.

EPISTLE I.

OF THE KNOWLEDGE AND CHARACTERS OF MEN.

ARGUMENT.

That it is not sufficient for this knowledge to consider Man in the Abstract: Books *will not serve the purpose, nor yet our own* Experience *singly,* Ver. 1. *General maxims, unless they be formed upon* both, *will be but notional,* Ver. 10. *Some peculiarity in every man, characteristic to himself, yet varying from himself,* Ver. 15. *Difficulties arising from our own Passions, Fancies, Faculties,* &c. Ver. 31. *The shortness of Life, to observe in, and the uncertainty of the* Principles of Action *in men, to observe by,* Ver. 37, &c. *Our* own *Principle of action often hid from ourselves,* Ver. 41. *Some few characters plain, but in general confounded, dissembled, or inconsistent,* Ver. 51. *The same man utterly different in different places and seasons,* Ver. 71. *Unimaginable weaknesses in the greatest,* Ver. 77, &c. *Nothing constant and certain but* God *and* Nature, Ver. 95. *No judging of the* Motives *from the actions; the same actions proceeding from contrary Motives, and the same Motives influencing contrary actions,* Ver. 100. II. *Yet to form* Characters, *we can only take the* strongest actions *of a man's life, and try to make them* agree. *The utter uncertainty of this, from* Nature *itself, and from* Policy, Ver. 120. Characters *given according to the* rank *of men of the world,* Ver. 135. *And some reason for it,* Ver. 141. Education *alters the* Nature, *or at least the* Character, *of many,* Ver. 149. Actions, Passions, Opinions, Manners, Humours, *or* Principles, *all subject to change. No judging by* Nature, *from*

Ver. 158 *to* 174. III. *It only remains to find (if we can) his* Ruling Passion. *That will certainly influence all the rest, and can reconcile the seeming or real inconsistency of all his actions,* Ver. 175. *Instanced in the extraordinary character of* Clodio, Ver. 179. *A caution against mistaking* second qualities *for* first, *which will destroy all possibility of the knowledge of mankind,* Ver. 210. *Examples of the strength of the* Ruling Passion, *and its continuation to the last breath,* Ver. 222, &c.

EPISTLE I.

OF THE KNOWLEDGE AND CHARACTERS OF MEN.

WITH THE COMMENTARY OF WILLIAM WARBURTON, D. D.

YES, you despise the man to books confin'd,
Who from his study rails at human kind;
Tho' what he learns he speaks, and may advance
Some general maxims, or be right by chance.

COMMENTARY.

EPISTLE I. *Of the Knowledge and Characters of Men.*] Whoever compares this with the former editions of the Epistle, will observe that the order and disposition of the several parts are entirely changed and reversed; though with hardly the alteration of a single word. When the editor, at the author's desire, first examined this Epistle, he was surprised to find it contain a certain number of exquisite observations, without order, connexion, or dependence: but much more so, when, on an attentive review, he saw, that if the Epistle were put into a different form, on an idea he then conceived, it would have all the clearness of method and force of connected reasoning. The author appeared as much struck with the thing as the editor, and agreed to put the poem into the present order; which has given it all the justness of a true composition. The introduction to the Epistle on Riches was in the same condition, and underwent the same reform.

This Epistle is divided into three principal parts or members. The first (from ver. 1 to 99.) treats of the difficulties in coming at the *Knowledge* and true *Characters of Men.* The second (from ver. 98 to 174.) of the *wrong means* which both *Philosophers* and *Men of the World* have employed in surmounting those difficulties. And the third (from ver. 173 to the end) treats of the *right means;* with directions for the application of them.

Ver. 1. *Yes, you despise the man, &c.*] The Epistle is introduced

The coxcomb bird so talkative and grave,
That from his cage cries cuckold, whore, and knave,

COMMENTARY.

duced (from ver. 1 to 15.) by observing, that the *Knowledge of men* is neither to be gained by books nor experience alone, but by the joint use of both; for that the *maxims* of the *Philosopher* and the *conclusions* of the *Man of the World* can, separately, but supply a vague and superficial knowledge: often not so much; as those *maxims* are founded in the abstract *notions* of the writer; and these *conclusions* are drawn from the uncertain *conjectures* of the observer. But when the Philosopher joins his *speculation* to the experience of the Man of the World, his *notions* are rectified into *principles*; and when the Man of the World regulates his *experience* on the *notions* of the Philosopher, his *conjectures* advance into *science*. Such is the reasoning of this introduction; which, besides its propriety to the general subject of the Epistle, has a peculiar relation to each of its parts or members. For the *causes of the difficulty* in coming at the knowledge and characters of men, explained in the first part, will shew the importance of what is here delivered, of the *joint* assistance of speculation and practice to surmount it: and the *wrong means*, which both *Philosophers* and *Men of the World* have employed in overcoming those difficulties discoursed of in the second part, have their source here deduced; which is seen to be a *separate* adherence of each to his own method of studying Men, and a mutual contempt of the other's. Lastly, the *right means* delivered in the third part would be of little use in the application, without the direction here delivered: for though the observation of men and manners discovered a RULING PASSION, yet, without a *philosophic* knowledge of human nature, we may easily mistake a *secondary* and *subsidiary* passion for the *principal*, and so be never the nearer in the knowledge of Men. But the elegant and easy *form* of the introduction equals the propriety of its *matter*; for the Epistle being addressed to a noble person, distinguished for his knowledge of the world, it opens, as it were, in the midst of a familiar conversation, which lets us at once into his character; where the Poet, by politely affecting only to ridicule the useless knowledge of men confined to books, and only to extol that acquired by the world, artfully insinuates how alike defective the latter may be, when conducted

Though many a passenger he rightly call,
You hold him no philosopher at all.
And yet the fate of all extremes is such,
Men may be read, as well as books, too much.

COMMENTARY.

conducted on the same narrow principle: which is too often the case; as *men of the world* are more than ordinarily prejudiced in favour of their own observations for *the sake of the observer;* and, for the same reason, less indulgent to the discoveries of others.

NOTES.

Ver. 8. *You hold him no philosopher at all.*] This is his own fault. Had he told us he was a *Philosopher*, we should have taken his word; as we do that of certain of our loquacious neighbours, who have always this title at their tongue's end. But men are generally as far from truth when they give themselves a name, as when their enemies bestow one upon them. *Philosophy* has been employed at different times, and on different occasions, to set matters right. At the *Reformation* it was used by Erasmus and his followers, to refine and purify Religion: and the monks could think of no better way to discredit them, than by calling them THE POETS.*

At present *Philosophy* has turned tail and is gone over to the Naturalists, VOLTAIRE and his followers, who employ it to debase and adulterate Religion: but, too wise to trust their good name to their enemies, they have conferred one upon themselves, LES PHILOSOPHES.

Indeed, their leader, if his modesty had not stood in his way, might have boasted, with the first of the name, who when Leon, Prince of the Phliasians, asked him what art he professed, replied, Of the arts I know nothing, but I am a Philosopher. *Warburton.*

Ver. 9. *And yet—Men may be read as well as books, too much, &c.*] The Poet has here covertly described a famous system of a *man*

* It is pleasant to observe, that whenever dulness finds itself oppressed by wit and eloquence, Nature points out to the like relief. *The Laws* (says grave Bishop Nicholson, speaking of Atterbury's famous book of the Rights and Powers of a Convocation) *will not long endure such a load of jest and* POETRY.

To observations which ourselves we make,
We grow more partial for th' observer's sake;
To written wisdom, as another's, less:
Maxims are drawn from notions, those from guess.
There's some peculiar in each leaf and grain,
Some unmark'd fibre, or some varying vein:
Shall only Man be taken in the gross?
Grant but as many sorts of mind as moss.
That each from other differs, first confess;
Next, that he varies from himself no less:

COMMENTARY.

I.

Ver. 15. *There's some peculiar, &c.*] The Poet enters on the first division of his subject, *the difficulties of coming at the knowledge and true characters of Men.* The first cause of this difficulty, which he prosecutes (from ver. 14 to 19.), is the great *diversity of characters;* of which, to abate our wonder, and not discourage our inquiry, he only desires we would grant him

" —but as many sorts of mind as moss."

Hereby artfully insinuating, that if Nature hath varied the most worthless vegetable into above three hundred species, we need not wonder at a greater diversity in her highest work, the human mind: and if the variety in that vegetable has been thought of importance enough to employ the leisure of a serious inquirer, much more will the same circumstance in this master-piece of the sublunary world deserve our study and attention.

" Shall only Man be taken in the gross?"

NOTES.

man of the world, the celebrated *Maxims of M. de la Rochefoucault,* which are one continued *satire* on human nature; and hold much of the ill language of the parrot. Our author's system of human nature will explain the *reason* of the censure.

Warburton.

Ver. 10. *Men may be read,*] " Say what they will of the great book of the world, we must read others to know how to read that." M. De Sevigné to R. Rabutin. *Warton.*

Add nature's, custom's, reason's, passion's strife,
And all opinion's colours cast on life.
Our depths who fathoms, or our shallows finds,
Quick whirls, and shifting eddies, of our minds?

COMMENTARY.

Ver. 19. *That each from other differs, &c.*] A second cause of this difficulty (from ver. 18 to 21.) is *man's inconstancy;* for not only one man differs from another, but the same man from himself.

Ver. 21. *Add nature's, &c.*] A third cause (from ver. 20 to 23.) is that *obscurity* thrown over the characters of men, through the strife and contest between *nature* and *custom*, between *reason* and *appetite*, between *truth* and *opinion*. And as most men, either through *education*, *temperature*, or *profession*, have their characters warped by *custom*, *appetite*, and *opinion*, the obscurity arising from thence is almost universal.

Ver. 23. *Our depths who fathoms, &c.*] A fourth cause (from ver. 22 to 25.) is deep *dissimulation*, and restless *caprice;* whereby the shallows of the mind are as difficult to be *found*, as the depths of it are to be *fathomed*.

NOTES.

Ver. 20. *Next, that he varies*] A sensible French writer says, that the faults and follies of men chiefly arise from the circumstance, qu'ils n'ont pas l'esprit, en équilibre, pour ainsi dire, avec leur caractère: Ciceron, par example, étoit un grand esprit et une ame foible; c'est pour cela, qu'il fut grand orateur et homme d'état médiocre. *Warton.*

Ver. 22. *And all opinion's colours cast on life, &c.*] The Poet refers here only to the effects. In the *Essay on Man* he gives both the *efficient* and the *final cause*. The first in the third Ep. ver. 231.

"Ere wit oblique had broke that steady light."

For *oblique wit is opinion*. The other, in the second Epistle ver. 283.

"Meanwhile opinion gilds with varying rays,
Those painted clouds that beautify our days." &c.

Warburton.

Ver. 23. *Our depths who fathoms, &c.*] "A mesure qu'on a plus d'esprit,"

On human actions reason though you can,
It may be reason, but it is not Man:
His principle of action once explore,
That instant 'tis his principle no more;
Like following life through creatures you dissect,
You lose it in the moment you detect.
Yet more; the difference is as great between
The optics seeing, as the objects seen.

COMMENTARY.

Ver. 25. *On human actions, &c.*] A fifth cause (from ver. 24 to 31.) is the sudden change of his *principle of action;* either on the point of its being laid open and detected, or when it is reasoned upon, and attempted to be explored.

Ver. 31. *Yet more; the difference, &c.*] Hitherto the Poet hath spoken of the causes of difficulty arising from the *obscurity of the object;* he now comes to those which proceed from *defects in the observer.* The first of which, and a sixth cause of difficulty, he shews (from ver. 30 to 37.) is the perverse *manners, affections,* and *imaginations* of the observer; whereby the characters of others are rarely seen either in their true *light, complexion,* or *proportion.*

NOTES.

d'esprit," says the profound Pascal, "on trouve qu'il y a plus d'hommes originaux." *Warton.*

Ver. 26. *It may be reason, but it is not Man:*] *i. e.* The Philosopher may invent a *rational hypothesis* which shall account for the appearances he would investigate; and yet that *hypothesis* be, all the while, very wide of *fact,* and the *nature of things. Warburton.*

Ver. 29. *Like following life through creatures you dissect,*
You lose it in the moment you detect.]

This simile is extremely beautiful. In order to shew the difficulty of discovering the operations of the heart in a *moral sense,* the Poet illustrates it by another attempt still more difficult, the discovery of its operations in a *natural.* For the seat of animal life being in the *heart,* our endeavours of tracing it thither must necessarily drive it from thence. *Warburton.*

All manners take a tincture from our own;
Or come discolour'd, through our passions shown.
Or fancy's beam enlarges, multiplies,
Contracts, inverts, and gives ten thousand dies.
Nor will life's stream for observation stay;
It hurries all too fast to mark their way:
In vain sedate reflections we would make,
When half our knowledge we must snatch, not take.
Oft, in the passions' wide rotation tost,
Our spring of action to ourselves is lost:

COMMENTARY.

Ver. 37. *Nor will life's stream for observation, &c.*] The seventh cause of difficulty, and the second arising from defects in the observer (from ver. 36 to 41.), is the *shortness of human life;* which will not suffer him to select and weigh out his knowledge, but just to snatch it, as it rolls swiftly by him, down the rapid current of time.

Ver. 41. *Oft, in the passions' &c.*] We come now to the eighth and last cause, which very properly concludes the account; as, in a sort, it sums up all the difficulties in one (from ver. 40 to 51.), namely, that very often the *man himself, is ignorant of his own motive of action;* the cause of which ignorance our author has admirably explained. When the mind (says he) is now tired out by the long conflict of opposite motives, it withdraws its attention; and suffers the *will* to be seized upon by the first that afterwards obtrudes itself; without taking much notice what that motive is. This is finely illustrated by what he supposes to be the natural cause of dreams; where the fancy just let loose, possesses itself of

NOTES.

Ver. 33. *All manners take a tincture from our own;*
Or come discolour'd, *through our passions shown.*]
These two lines are remarkable for the exactness and propriety of expression. The word *tincture*, which implies a weak colour given by degrees, well describes the influence of the *manners;* and the word *discolour*, which implies a quicker change and by a deeper die, denotes as well the operation of the *passions.* *Warburton.*

Tir'd, not determin'd, to the last we yield,
And what comes then is master of the field.
As the last image of that troubled heap,
When sense subsides, and fancy sports in sleep,
(Tho' past the recollection of the thought,)
Becomes the stuff of which our dream is wrought,
Something as dim to our internal view,
Is thus, perhaps, the cause of most we do.
True, some are open, and to all men known;
Others so very close they're hid from none;

COMMENTARY.

of the *last image* which it meets with, on the confines between sleeping and waking; and on that erects all its ideal scenery; yet this seizure is, with great difficulty, recollected; and never, but when by some accident we happen to have our first slumbers suddenly interrupted. Then (which proves the truth of the hypothesis) we are sometimes able to trace the workings of the fancy backwards, from idea to idea, in a chain, till we come to that from whence they all arose.

Ver. 51. *True, some are open, &c.*] But now, in answer to all this, an *objector* (from ver. 50 to 63.) may say, "That these difficulties seem to be aggravated. For many characters are so plainly marked,

NOTES.

Ver. 48. *Becomes the stuff of which our dream is wrought,*] Giraldus Cambrensis, speaking of a *divine vision* with which he was favoured, seems yet to think that it might be *made out of the stuff of his waking thoughts.* His words are these: "Cum igitur super universis quæ nobis acciderant, mecum non mediocriter anxius extiterim—suspiriosæ mihi multoties cogitationes in animum ascenderint, nocte quadam in somnis EX RELIQUIIS FORTE COGITATIONUM Visionem vidi," &c. *De rebus a se gestis, lib.* ii. *c.* 12.—By which we see, and it is worth remarking, that to philosophize on our superstitions is so far from erasing them, that it engraves them but the more deeply in the mind. The reason is plain; it turns the *objection* to them, to a *solution* in their credit.

Warburton.

(So darkness strikes the sense no less than light;)
Thus gracious CHANDOS is belov'd at sight;
And every child hates Shylock, tho' his soul
Still sits at squat, and peeps not from its hole.
At half mankind when generous Manly raves,
All know 'tis virtue, for he thinks them knaves:
When universal homage Umbra pays,
All see 'tis vice, and itch of vulgar praise.

COMMENTARY.

marked, that no man can mistake them: and not so only in the more *open* and *frank*, but in the *closest* and most *recluse* likewise." Of each of these the objector gives an instance; by which it appears, that the forbidding closeness and concealed hypocrisy in the one, are as conspicuous to all mankind, as the gracious openness and frank plain-dealing of the other.——The reader sees, this objection is more particularly levelled at the doctrine of ver. 23.

" Our *depths* who fathoms, or our *shallows* finds;"

for here it endeavours to prove, that both are equally explorable.

NOTES.

Ver. 56. *peeps not from its hole.*] Which shews that this grave person was content with his present situation, as finding but small satisfaction in what a famous Poet reckons one of the advantages of old age:

" The soul's dark cottage, batter'd and decay'd,
Lets in new light through chinks that Time has made."

SCRIBL. *Warburton.*

Ver. 57. *At half mankind*] The character alluded to is the principal one in the Plain Dealer of Wycherley, a comedy taken from the Misanthrope of Moliere, but much inferior to the original. Alcestes has not that bitterness of spirit, and has much more humanity and honour than Manly. Writers transfuse their own characters into their works: Wycherley was a vain and profligate libertine; Moliere was beloved for his candour, sweetness of temper, and integrity. *Warton.*

When flattery glares, all hate it in a queen,
While one there is who charms us with his spleen.
But these plain characters we rarely find;
Tho' strong the bent, yet quick the turns of mind:
Or puzzling contraries confound the whole; 65
Or affectations quite reverse the soul.
The dull, flat falsehood serves for policy;
And in the cunning, truth itself's a lie:

COMMENTARY.

Ver. 63. *But these plain characters, &c.*] To this objection, therefore, our author replies (from ver. 62 to 71.) that indeed the fact may be true, in the instances given; but that such *plain characters* are extremely rare. And for the truth of this, he not only appeals to experience, but explains the causes of those perplexed and complicated humours which diffuse themselves over the whole species. 1. The first of which is, the *vivacity of the imagination;* that when the bias of the passions is sufficiently determined to mark out the character, the vigour of the fancy generally rising in proportion to the strength of the appetites, the one no sooner draws the bias, than the other turns it to a contrary direction:

" Tho' strong the bent, yet quick the turns of mind."

2. A second cause is the *contrariety of appetites*, which drawing several ways, as avarice and luxury, ambition and indolence, &c. expressed in the line,

" Or puzzling contraries confound the whole;"

must

NOTES.

Ver. 61. *hate it in a queen,*] Meaning Queen Caroline, whom he was fond of censuring; as was Bolingbroke. See vol. i. p. 123. of his works, for a bitter ridicule on her affectation of science. *Warton.*

Ver. 62. *who charms us with his spleen.*] Closely copied from Boileau:

" Un esprit né chagrin plaît par son chagrin même."

It is a compliment to Swift. *Warton.*

Unthought-of frailties cheat us in the wise;
The fool lies hid in inconsistencies.
See the same man, in vigour, in the gout;
Alone, in company; in place, or out;

COMMENTARY.

must needs make the same character inconsistent to itself, and of course inexplicable by the observer.

3. A third cause is *Affectation*, which aspires to qualities that neither nature nor education has given us; and consequently, will be exerted with the same restraint and difficulty that a tumbler walks upon his hands; on which account it is that he says—

"Affectations quite reverse the soul;"

natural passions may, indeed, turn it from that bias which the ruling one has given it; but the *affected passions* distort all its faculties, and cramp all its operations: so that humanity itself, as well as its qualities, is no longer a distinguishable thing.

4. A fourth cause lies in the *Inequalities of the human mind*, which expose the wise to unexpected frailties, and conduct the weak to as unlooked-for wisdom.

Ver. 71. *See the same man, &c.*] Of all these four *causes* he here gives EXAMPLES: 1. Of the *vivacity of the imagination* (from ver. 70 to 77.)—2. Of the *contrariety of Appetites* (from ver. 76 to 81.)—3. Of *Affectations* (from ver. 80 to 87.)—and, 4. Of the *Inequalities of the human mind* (from ver. 86 to 95.).

NOTES.

Ver. 69. *Unthought-of frailties*] The night before the battle of Blenheim, after a council of war had been held in the Duke of Marlborough's tent, at which Prince Louis of Baden and Prince Eugene had assisted, the latter, after the council had broke up, stepped back to the tent to communicate something he had forgot to the Duke, whom he found giving orders to his aid-de-camp Colonel Selwyn (who related this fact) at the table, on which there was now only a single taper burning, all the others being extinguished the moment the council was over. "What a man is this," said Prince Eugene, "who at such a time can think of saving the ends of candles!" *Warton.*

Ver. 72. *Alone, in company;*] The unexpected inequalities of our

Early at business, and at hazard late;
Mad at a fox-chase, wise at a debate;
Drunk at a borough, civil at a ball;
Friendly at Hackney, faithless at Whitehall.
Catius is ever moral, ever grave,
Thinks who endures a knave, is next a knave,
Save just at dinner—then prefers, no doubt,
A rogue with venison to a saint without.
Who would not praise Patritio's high desert,
His hand unstain'd, his uncorrupted heart,

NOTES.

our minds and tempers is a subject that has been exhausted by Montaigne in the 1st chap. of the 2d book of his Essays, which, it is evident, Pope had been reading. Nothing can be finer than the picture which Tully has given, in his oration for Cælius, of the inconsistencies and varieties of Catiline's conduct; ending with, "Quis clarioribus viris quodam tempore jucundior? Quis turpioribus conjunctior? Quis civis meliorum partium aliquando? Quis tetrior hostis huic civitati? Quis in voluptatibus inquinatior? Quis in laboribus patientior? Quis in rapacitate avarior? Quis in largitione effusior?" The learned Markland, in defending Euripides from a well-known objection made to the inconsistency of the character of Iphigenia, is of opinion, that the Poet's design, through the whole tragedy, was, in general, to shew the inequality and inconsistency of the human character; and gives instances of this inconsistency in the behaviour of Agamemnon, Menelaus, Achilles, the Chorus, and all the persons introduced, except Clytemnestra; intending to display "humani animi levitatem et inconstantiam in consiliis suis, et nos omnes æquè esse homines." Eurip. Iphig. Ant. p. 191. *Warton.*

Ver. 81. *Patritio's high desert,*] Meaning Lord Godolphin, of whom, says Prior, in an original letter that I have seen, "as the wise Earl of Godolphin told me when he turned me out for having served him;—Things change, times change, and men change." Though he was a great gamester, yet he was an able and honest minister. *Warton.*

His comprehensive head? all interests weigh'd,
All Europe sav'd, yet Britain not betray'd!
He thanks you not, his pride is in piquet,
Newmarket fame, and judgment at a bet.
What made (say, Montaigne, or more sage Charron!)
Otho a warrior, Cromwell a buffoon?

NOTES.

Ver. 87. *say, Montaigne, or more sage Charron!*] Charron was an admirer of Montaigne; had contracted a strict friendship with him; and has transferred an infinite number of his thoughts into his famous book, *De la Sagesse;* but his moderating every where the extravagant Pyrrhonism of his friend, is the reason why the Poet calls him *more sage Charron.* *Warburton.*

Ver. 87. *What made*] One of the reasons that makes Montaigne so agreeable a writer is, that he gives so strong a picture of the way of life of a country gentleman in the reign of Henry III. The descriptions of his castle, of his library, of his travels, of his entertainments, of his diet and dress, are particularly pleasing. Malebranche and Pascal have severely and justly censured his scepticism. Peter Charron contracted a very strict friendship with him, insomuch that Montaigne permitted him by his will to bear his arms. In his Book of Wisdom, which was published at Bourdeaux in the year 1601, he has inserted a great number of Montaigne's sentiments. This treatise has been loudly blamed for its freedom by many writers of France, and particularly Garasse the Jesuit. Bayle has remarked, in opposition to these censurers, that, of a hundred thousand readers, there are hardly three to be found in any age who are well qualified to judge of a book, wherein the ideas of an exact and metaphysical reasoning are set in

VARIATIONS.

After ver. 86. in the former editions:

Triumphant leaders, at an army's head,
Hemm'd round with glories, pilfer cloth or bread;
As meanly plunder as they bravely fought;
Now save a people, and now save a groat. *Warburton.*

A perjur'd prince, a leaden saint revere,
A godless Regent tremble at a star? 90
The throne a bigot keep, a genius quit,
Faithless through piety, and duped through wit?

NOTES.

in opposition to the most common opinions. Pope has borrowed many sensible remarks from Charron, of whom Bolingbroke was particularly fond. *Warton.*

Ver. 89. *A perjur'd prince,*] Louis XI. of France wore in his hat a leaden image of the Virgin Mary, which, when he swore by, he feared to break his oath. *Pope.*

Ver. 90. *A godless Regent tremble at a star?*] Philip Duke of Orleans, Regent in the minority of Louis XV. superstitious in judicial astrology, though an unbeliever in all religion. *Pope.*

The same has been observed of many other *Politicians.* The Italians, in general, are not more noted for their refined politics, than for their attachment to the dotages of *Astrology*, under the influence of *Atheism.* It may be worth while to inquire into the cause of so singular a phœnomenon, as it may probably do honour to Religion. These men observing (and none have equal opportunities of so doing) how perpetually public events fall out besides their expectation, and contrary to the best laid schemes of worldly policy, cannot but confess that human affairs are ordered by some power extrinsical. To acknowledge a God and his Providence, would be next to introducing a morality destructive of that civil system which they think necessary for the government of the world. They have recourse therefore to that absurd scheme of power which rules by no other law than *Fate* or *Destiny.* *Warburton.*

The Duke of Orleans, here pointed at, was an infidel and a libertine, and at the same time, as well as Bouranvilliers and Cardan, who calculated the nativity of Jesus Christ, was a bigotted believer in judicial astrology; he was said to be the author, which, however, has been doubted, of many of those flimsy songs, *nugæ canoræ*, to which the language and manners of France seem to be peculiarly adapted. He knew mankind. "Quiconque est sans honneur et sans humeur, est un courtisan parfaite," was one of his favourite sayings. *Warton.*

Ver. 91. *The throne a bigot keep, a genius quit,*] Philip V. of Spain,

Europe a woman, child, or dotard rule,
And just her wisest monarch made a fool?
Know, GOD and NATURE only are the same: 95
In Man, the judgment shoots at flying game;
A bird of passage! gone as soon as found;
Now in the moon perhaps, now under ground.

COMMENTARY.

Ver. 95. *Know*, GOD *and* NATURE, *&c.*] Having thus proved what he had proposed, the *premises* naturally led him into a moral reflection, with which he concludes his *first part*, namely, that constancy is to be expected in no human character whatsoever; but is to be found only in God and his Laws: that as to Man, he is not only perpetually shifting and varying, even while *within the verge* of his own nature; but is frequently flying out into each extreme, both *above* and *below* it: now associating in good earnest with brutes, and now again affecting the imaginary conversation of angels. [See *Essay on Man*, Ep. ii. ver. 8.]

"A bird of passage! gone as soon as found;
Now in the *moon perhaps, now under ground.*"

NOTES.

Spain, who, after renouncing the throne for Religion, resumed it to gratify his Queen; and Victor Amadeus II. King of Sardinia, who resigned the crown, and trying to re-assume it, was imprisoned till his death. *Pope.*

Ver. 93. *Europe a woman, child, or dotard rule,*
And just her wisest monarch made a fool?]

The Czarina, the King of France, the Pope, and the above-mentioned King of Sardinia. *Warburton.*

Ver. 95. *Know, God and Nature, &c.*] By *Nature* is not here meant any imaginary substitute of God, called a *Plastic nature;* but God's *moral laws:* and this observation was inserted with great propriety and discretion, in the conclusion of a long detail of the various characters of men; for, from the differing estimate of human actions, arising from the discordancy of men's characters, *Montaigne* and others have been bold enough to insinuate, that morality is founded more in custom and fashion than in the *nature* of things. The speaking therefore of a *moral law of God*, as having all the constancy and durability of his *Essence*, had a high expediency, in this place. *Warburton.*

II.

In vain the sage, with retrospective eye,
Would from th' apparent What conclude the Why,
Infer the motive from the deed, and shew
That what we chanc'd was what we meant to do.
Behold! if fortune or a mistress frowns,
Some plunge in business, others shave their crowns:
To ease the soul of one oppressive weight,
This quits an empire, that embroils a state:
The same adust complexion has impell'd
Charles to the convent, Philip to the field.

COMMENTARY.

II.

Ver. 99. *In vain the sage, &c.*] The author having shewn the difficulties in coming to the knowledge and true characters of men, enters now upon the second division of his Poem, which is *of the wrong means that both Philosophers and Men of the world have employed in surmounting those difficulties.* He had, in the introduction, spoken of the absurd conduct of both, in despising the assistance of each other: he now justifies his censure by an examination of their peculiar doctrines; and, to take them in their own way, considers them, as they would be considered, *separately.* And first, of the *Philosopher*, whose principal mistake is in supposing *that actions best decypher the motive of the actor.* This he confutes (from ver. 98 to 109.) by shewing that *different actions* proceed often from the *same motive;* whether of *accident*, as disappointed views; or of *temperature*, as an adust complexion; which he thus illustrates:

"Behold! if fortune or a mistress frowns," &c.

In judging, therefore, of *motives* by *actions*, the Philosopher must needs be frequently mistaken; because the passion or appetite, which, when impelling to *action*, we call the *motive* of it, may be equally gratified in the pursuit of very different measures.

NOTES.

Ver. 107. *The same adust complexion has impell'd*
Charles to the convent, Philip to the field.]

Philip II. was of an atrabilaire complexion. He derived it from his

Not always actions shew the man: we find
Who does a kindness, is not therefore kind;
Perhaps prosperity becalm'd his breast;
Perhaps the wind just shifted from the east.
Not therefore humble he who seeks retreat,
Pride guides his steps, and bids him shun the great:
Who combats bravely, is not therefore brave,
He dreads a death-bed like the meanest slave;

COMMENTARY.

Ver. 109. *Not always actions shew the man: &c.*] The Philosopher's second mistake is, that *actions decypher the character of the actor.* This too the author confutes (from ver. 108 to 135.); and as, in correcting the foregoing mistake, he proved, *that different actions often proceed from the same motive;* so here he proves, *that the same action often proceeds from different motives:* thus a *kind action,* he observes, as commonly ariseth from the accidents of prosperity or fine weather, as from a natural disposition to humanity; a *modest action,* as well from pride, as humility; a *brave action,* as easily from habit or fashion, as magnanimity; and a *prudent action,* as often from vanity as wisdom. Now the *character* being really determined by the *motives;* and various, nay, contrary *motives,* producing the same *action;* the *action* can never decypher the *character of the actor.* But further (continues the Poet), if we attend to what hath been said, we shall discover another circumstance in the case, which will not only make it extremely difficult, but absolutely impracticable to decypher the character by the action: and that is, the *discordancy of action* in the same character; a necessary consequence of the two principles proved above, *that different actions proceed from the same motive,* and that *the same action proceeds from different motives.*

NOTES.

his father Charles V., whose health, the historians of his life tell us, was frequently disordered by bilious fevers. But what was most extraordinary, the same complexion not only drove them variously, but made each act contrary to his character; Charles, who was an active man, when he retired into a convent; Philip, who was a man of the closet, when he gave the battle of St. Quintin.

Warburton.

Who reasons wisely is not therefore wise,
His pride in reasoning, not in acting lies.
But grant that actions best discover man;
Take the most strong, and sort them as you can.
The few that glare each character must mark;
You balance not the many in the dark.
What will you do with such as disagree?
Suppress them, or miscall them policy?
Must then at once (the character to save)
The plain rough hero turn a crafty knave?
Alas! in truth the man but chang'd his mind,
Perhaps was sick, in love, or had not dined.

COMMENTARY.

Ver. 119. *But grant that actions, &c.*] But (continues our author), if you will judge of man by his *actions*, you are not to select such only as you like, or can manage; you must fairly take all you find. Now, when you have got these together, they will prove so very discordant, that no consistent character can possibly be made out of them. What then is to be done? Will you *suppress* all those you cannot reconcile to the few capital actions which you chuse for the foundation of your character? But this the laws of truth will not permit. Will you then *miscall* them? and say they were not the natural workings of the man, but the disguises of the politician? But what will you get by this, besides reversing the best known character, and making the owner of it the direct opposite of himself? However (says our author), this is the way which the reasoning and philosophic historian hath been always ready to take with the *actions* of great men; of which he gives two famous instances in the life of Cæsar. The conclusion from the whole is, that *actions do not show the man.*

NOTES.

Ver. 127. *Alas! in truth*] The Grand Seignior offered to assist Henry IV. against his rebellious subjects, not for any deep political reason, but only because he hated the word League. It is a fault in Davila, as well as Tacitus, never to ascribe great events to whim, caprice, private passions, and petty causes. The Treaty

Ask why from Britain Cæsar would retreat?
Cæsar himself might whisper, he was beat. 130

NOTES.

Treaty of Utrecht was occasioned, it is said, by a quarrel betwixt the Duchess of Marlborough and Queen Anne about a pair of gloves. The expedition to the island of Ré was undertaken to gratify a foolish and romantic passion of the Duke of Buckingham. The coquetry of the daughter of Count Julien introduced the Saracens into Spain. *Warton.*

Ver. 129. *Ask why from Britain*] In former editions, the third and fourth lines were,

The mighty Czar what mov'd to wed a punk?
The mighty Czar would tell you, he was drunk.

But it was altered as above; and altered for the worse. It is strange that Pope should not have known that drunkenness was not one of Cæsar's vices. Suetonius says, "*Vini parcissimum* ne inimici quidem negaverunt. Verbum M. Catonis est, Unum ex omnibus Cæsarem ad evertendam rempublicam *sobrium* accessisse." Vit. D. Julius Cæsar, section 53. Aaron Hill, in his Letters, said, he had in his possession some authentic documents that would redound to the honour of the Czar, for making this match with Catharine, and would place this part of his conduct, which the malice of some great courts in Europe had taken pains to misrepresent, in another and very honourable point of view. *Warton.*

Ver. 130. *Cæsar himself might whisper, he was beat.*] Cæsar wrote his *Commentaries*, in imitation of the Greek Generals, for the entertainment of the world. But had his friend asked him, in his ear,

VARIATIONS.

Ver. 129.] In the former editions:

Ask why from Britain Cæsar made retreat?
Cæsar himself would tell you, he was beat.
The mighty Czar what mov'd to wed a punk?
The mighty Czar would tell you, he was drunk.

Altered as above, because Cæsar wrote his Commentaries of this war, and does *not* tell you he was beat. And as Cæsar afforded an instance of both cases, it was thought better to make him the single example. *Warburton.*

Why risk the world's great empire for a punk?
Cæsar perhaps might answer, he was drunk.
But, sage historians! 'tis your task to prove
One action, conduct; one, heroic love.
'Tis from high life high characters are drawn; 135
A saint in crape is twice a saint in lawn;

COMMENTARY.

Ver. 135. *'Tis from high life, &c.*] The Poet, having done with the *Philosopher*, now turns to the *Man of the world*; whose *first* mistake is in supposing men's true *characters may be known by their station*. This, though a mere mob-opinion, is the opinion in fashion, and cherished by the mob of all denominations: therefore, though beneath the Poet's reasoning, he thought it deserving of his ridicule; and the strongest was what he gives (from ver. 134 to 141.), a naked exposition of the fact; to which he has subjoined (from ver. 140 to 149.) an ironical apology, that, as Virtue is cultivated with infinitely more labour in courts than in cottages, it is but just to set an infinitely higher value on it; which, says he (with much pleasantry) is most agreeable to all the fashionable ways of estimation. For why do the connoisseurs prefer the lively colour in a gem before that in a flower, but for its extreme rarity and difficulty of production?

NOTES.

ear, the reason of his sudden retreat from Britain, after so many pretended victories, we have cause to suspect, even from his own public relation of that matter, that he would have *whispered he was beat.* *Warburton.*

Ver. 131. *Why risk the world's great empire for a punk?*] After the battle of Pharsalia, Cæsar pursued his enemy to Alexandria, where he became infatuated with the charms of Cleopatra, and, instead of pushing his advantages, and dispersing the relics of the Pharsalian quarrel, brought upon himself (after narrowly escaping the violence of an enraged populace) an unnecessary war, at a time his arms were most wanted elsewhere. *Warburton.*

Ver. 135. *'Tis from high life,*] Copied from Boileau, v. 203. Sat. 8. *Warton.*

A judge is just, a chanc'lor juster still;
A gownman, learn'd; a bishop, what you will;
Wise, if a minister; but, if a king,
More wise, more learn'd, more just, more every thing.
Court-virtues bear, like gems, the highest rate,
Born where heaven's influence scarce can penetrate:
In life's low vale, the soil the virtues like,
They please as beauties, here as wonders strike.
Tho' the same sun with all-diffusive rays
Blush in the rose, and in the diamond blaze,
We prize the stronger effort of his power,
And justly set the gem above the flower.
'Tis education forms the common mind;
Just as the twig is bent, the tree's inclin'd.

COMMENTARY.

Ver. 149. *'Tis education forms, &c.*] The second mistake of the *Man*

NOTES.

Ver. 137. *A judge is just, a chanc'lor juster still;*
A gownman, learn'd; a bishop, what you will;]

Each profession is here equally turned into ridicule; but not with equal justice. The *Lawyer at the Bar* pleads indifferently for right and wrong. On the *Bench* he is the most zealous patron and investigator of truth. The *Divine*, on the contrary, while in a private station, consults only the honour of his Religion; but when advanced to a public, he is only anxious that *the Ministry be not blamed.* Whence comes this difference? Not from their own dispositions, but from that of the times: in which, *Justice* is supposed to be necessary to civil society; and *Religion*, of no such use. Therefore the Lawyer, when advanced into the Magistracy, is invariably attached to the right; and the Churchman in authority must give no offence. *Warburton.*

Ver. 141. *Court-virtues bear, like gems, &c.*] This whole reflection, and the similitude brought to support it, have great delicacy of ridicule, together with all the charms of wit and poetry. *Warburton.*

Boastful and rough, your first son is a 'squire;
The next a tradesman, meek, and much a liar;
Tom struts a soldier, open, bold, and brave;
Will sneaks a scrivener, an exceeding knave.
Is he a churchman? then he's fond of pow'r:
A quaker? sly: a presbyterian? sour:
A smart free-thinker? all things in an hour.
Ask men's opinions: Scoto now shall tell
How trade increases, and the world goes well;

COMMENTARY.

Man of the world is more serious; it is, that *characters are best judged of by the general manners.* This the Poet confutes in a lively enumeration of examples (from ver. 148 to 158.) which shew, that how similar or different soever the *manners* be by *nature*, yet they are all new-modelled by *Education* and *Profession*; where each man invariably receives that exotic form, which the mould he falls into is fitted to imprint. The *natural character*, therefore, can never be judged of by these *fictitious manners.*

Ver. 158. *Ask men's opinions: &c.*] The third mistake is, in judging of men's characters by their *opinions, and turn of thinking.* But these, the Poet shews by two examples (from ver. 157 to 166.), are generally swayed by *interest*, both in the *affairs of life* and *speculation.*

NOTES.

Ver. 151. *Boastful and rough,*] How much knowledge of life, of manners, and characters, is contained in the eleven succeeding lines! We are not to ascribe so much to the powerful influence of education alone, as does Helvetius in his fanciful Treatise de L'Esprit, who imagines and asserts that all men are born with equal talents, and that it is education alone that causes any difference or superiority in different men. It is the common mind that is formed by education; which has not the same effect on minds, on which nature and constitution have imprinted deep and strong marks of original genius. It is impossible not to lament that Gray did not finish the design he sketched out, of an Essay on the Alliance of Education and Government, which, from the specimens we find in his life (page 193), would doubtless have been a master-piece of didactic poetry. *Warton.*

Strike off his pension, by the setting sun,
And Britain, if not Europe, is undone.
That gay free-thinker, a fine talker once,
What turns him now a stupid silent dunce?
Some God, or spirit he has lately found;
Or chanc'd to meet a minister that frown'd.
Judge we by nature? Habit can efface,
Interest o'ercome, or policy take place:

COMMENTARY.

Ver. 166. *Judge we by nature? &c.*] The Poet having gone through the mistakes both of the *Philosopher* and *Man of the world*, separately, turns now to both; and (from ver. 165 to 174.) jointly addresses them in a recapitulation of his reasoning against *each*. He shews, that if we pretend to develope the character by the *natural disposition in general*, we shall find it extremely difficult, because this is often effaced by habit, overswayed by interest, and suspended by policy: if by *actions*, their contrariety will leave us in utter doubt and uncertainty: if by *passions*, we shall be

NOTES.

Ver. 164, 165. *Some God, or spirit he has lately found;*
Or chanc'd to meet a minister that frown'd.]
Disasters the most unlooked-for, as they were what the Free-thinker's *speculations* and *practice* were principally directed to avoid. The Poet here alludes to the ancient classical opinion, that the sudden vision of a God was wont to strike the irreverent observer speechless. He has only a little extended the conceit, and supposed, that the terrors of a *Court-Deity* might have the like effect on one of these devoted worshippers. SCRIBL.
Warburton.

Ver. 166. *Judge we by nature?*] We find here, in the compass of eight lines, an anatomy of human nature; more sense and observation cannot well be compressed and concluded in a narrower space. This passage might be drawn out into a voluminous commentary,

VARIATIONS.

Ver. 165.] Or chanc'd to meet Sir Robert when he frown'd.
Warburton.

By actions? those uncertainty divides:
By passions? these dissimulation hides:
Opinions? they still take a wider range:
Find, if you can, in what you cannot change.

COMMENTARY.

be perpetually misled by the mask of dissimulation: if by *opinions*, all these concur together to perplex the inquiry. Shew us then, says he, in the whole range of your *philosophy* and *experience*, the thing we can be certain of; for (to sum up all in a word),

"*Manners* with fortunes, *humours* turn with climes,
Tenets with books, and *principles* with times."

We must seek therefore some other road to the point we aim at.

NOTES.

mentary, and be worked up into a system concerning the knowledge of the world. There seems to be an inaccuracy in the use of the last verb; the natural temperament is by no means suddenly changed, or turned, with a change of climate; though undoubtedly the humours are originally formed by it. "Influenced by," would be a more proper expression than "turn with," if the metre would admit it.

I have seen a collection of all the passages, in Horace and Pope, that relate to men and manners, placed together and compared with each other. The superiority was given to Pope, for a deeper knowledge of human nature than could be found in Horace.

We may justly apply to Pope what Cicero says so finely of Thucydides: "Omnes dicendi artificio, meâ sententiâ facilè vicit, ut, verborum prope numerum, sententiarum numero consequatur; ità porro verbis aptus et pressus, ut nescias utrum res oratione, an verba sententiis illustrentur." *Warton.*

Ver. 171. *in what you cannot change.*] "Combien diversement jugeons nous de choses?" says honest Montaigne. "Combien de fois changeons nous nos fantasies? Ce que je tien aujourdhuy, ce que je croy, je le tien et le croy, de toute ma créance; mais ne m'est-il pas advenu, non une fois mais cent, mais mille, et tous les jours, d'avoir embrassé quelque autre chose?" Montaigne furnished many hints for this Epistle. *Warton.*

Manners with fortunes, humours turn with climes,
Tenets with books, and principles with times.

III.

Search then the RULING PASSION. There, alone,
The wild are constant, and the cunning known; 175

COMMENTARY.

III.

Ver. 174. *Search then the Ruling Passion. &c.*] And now we enter on the *third* and last part; which treats of the *right means* of surmounting the difficulties in coming to the *knowledge* and *characters of men*. This the Poet shews, is *by investigating the* RULING PASSION; of whose origin and nature we may find an exact account in the second Epistle of the *Essay on Man*. This *Principle*, he rightly observes (from ver. 173 to 180.), is the clue which must guide us through all the intricacies in the ways of men. To convince us of this, he applies it (from ver. 179 to 210.) to the most wild and inconsistent character that ever was; which (when drawn out at length, as we here find it, in a spirit of poetry as rare as the character itself), we see, this *Principle* unravels, and renders throughout of one plain consistent thread.

NOTES.

Ver. 172-3. *Manners with fortunes, humours turn with climes,*
Tenets with books, and principles with times.]

The Poet had hitherto reckoned up the several *simple* causes which hinder our knowledge of the natural characters of men. In these two fine lines, he describes the *complicated* causes. *Humours* bear the same relation to *manners*, that *principles* do to *tenets*; that is, the former are *modes* of the latter; our *manners* (says the Poet) are warped from nature by our *fortunes* or stations; our *tenets*, by our *books* or professions; and then each drawn still more oblique into *humours* and *political principles*, by the temperature of the climate, and the constitution of the *government*. *Warburton.*

Ver. 174. *the* RULING PASSION:] Two eminent writers have attacked our author's notion of a Ruling Passion, Mr. Harris and Dr. Johnson. The former says, "One talks of an universal passion; as if all passions were not universal. Another talks of a Ruling

The fool consistent, and the false sincere;
Priests, princes, women, no dissemblers here.
This clue once found, unravels all the rest,
The prospect clears, and WHARTON stands confess'd.
Wharton, the scorn and wonder of our days,
Whose Ruling Passion was the lust of praise:
Born with whate'er could win it from the wise,
Women and fools must like him, or he dies;
Tho' wond'ring senates hung on all he spoke,
The club must hail him master of the joke.
Shall parts so various aim at nothing new?
He'll shine a Tully and a Wilmot too.
Then turns repentant, and his God adores
With the same spirit that he drinks and whores;

NOTES.

Ruling Passion; and means, without knowing it, certain ruling opinions. Thus, when specious falsehood assumes the lyre, we are charmed with the music, and worship her as truth."

I shall add, that the expression, Ruling Passion, was first used by Roscommon. See how much is attributed to the effects of a Ruling Passion; Essay on Man, Epistle ii. ver. 132. *Warton.*

And see also how this Ruling Passion is modified, controlled, and converted to the most beneficial purposes, in the same Epistle, from ver. 161 to ver. 217.

Ver. 177. *Priests, princes, women, no dissemblers here.*] Insinuating that one common principle, *the pursuit of power*, gives a conformity of conduct to the most distant and different characters. *Warburton.*

Ver. 181. *the lust of praise:*] This very well expresses the *grossness* of his appetite for it; where the strength of the passion had destroyed all the delicacy of the sensation. *Warburton.*

Ver. 187.] John Wilmot, Earl of Rochester, famous for his wit and extravagances in the time of Charles the Second. *Warburton.*

Ver. 189. *With the same* spirit] *Spirit* for *principle*, not *passion*. *Warburton.*

Enough, if all around him but admire,
And now the punk applaud, and now the friar.
Thus with each gift of nature and of art,
And wanting nothing but an honest heart;
Grown all to all, from no one vice exempt;
And most contemptible to shun contempt;
His Passion still, to covet general praise,
His life, to forfeit it a thousand ways;
A constant bounty which no friend has made;
An angel tongue, which no man can persuade;
A fool, with more of wit than half mankind;
Too rash for thought, for action too refin'd:
A tyrant to the wife his heart approves;
A rebel to the very king he loves;

NOTES.

Ver. 190. *Enough, if all around him but admire, &c.*] What an able French writer observes of *Alcibiades*, may be justly applied to this nobleman. "Ce n'étoit pas un *ambitieux*, mais un homme *vain*, qui vouloit faire du bruit, et occuper les Athéniens. Il avoit l'*esprit* d'un grand homme; mais son *ame*, dont les ressorts amollis étoient devenus incapables d'une application constante, ne pouvoit s'élever au grand, que par boutade. J'ai bien de la peine à croire, qu'un homme assez souple, pour être à Sparte aussi dur et aussi sévère, qu'un Spartiate; dans l'Ionie aussi recherché dans ses plaisirs, qu'un Ionien, &c. fût propre à faire un grand homme." *Warburton.*

Ver. 200. *A* fool, *with more of* wit] *Folly*, joined with much *wit*, produces that behaviour which we call *absurdity;* and this absurdity the Poet has here admirably described in the words,

"Too rash for thought, for action too refin'd:"

by which we are given to understand, that the person described, indulged his fancy when he should have used his judgment; and pursued his speculations when he should have trusted to his experience. *Warburton.*

He dies, sad out-cast of each church and state,
And, harder still! flagitious, yet not great.
Ask you why Wharton broke thro' ev'ry rule?
'Twas all for fear the knaves should call him fool.

NOTES.

Ver. 205. *And, harder still! flagitious, yet not great.*] To arrive at what the world calls GREATNESS, a wicked man must either hide and conceal his vices, or he must openly and steadily practise them in the pursuit and attainment of one important end. This unhappy nobleman did neither. *Warburton.*

Ver. 206. *Ask you why Wharton*] "This celebrated peer," says Lord Orford, "like Buckingham and Rochester, comforted all the grave and dull by throwing away the brightest profusion of parts on witty fooleries, debaucheries, and scrapes, which may mix graces with a great character, but never can compose one. If Julius Cæsar had only rioted with Catiline, he had never been emperor of the world. Indeed, the Duke of Wharton was not made for conquest; he was not equally formed for a Round-house and Pharsalia. In one of his ballads he has bantered his own want of heroism; it was in a song he made on being seized by the guard in St. James's Park, for singing the Jacobite air, 'The King shall have his own again:'

"The duke he drew out half his sword,
——— The guard drew out the rest."

His levities, wit, and want of principles, his eloquence and adventures, are too well known to be recapitulated. With attachment to no party, though with talents to govern any party, this lively man changed the free air of Westminster for the gloom of the Escurial, the prospect of King George's garter for the Pretender's; and, with indifference to all religion, the frolic lord, who had writ the ballad on the Archbishop of Canterbury, died in the habit of a capuchin.

It is difficult to give an account of the works of so mercurial a man, whose library was a tavern, and women of pleasure his muses. A thousand sallies of his imagination may have been lost: he no more wrote for fame than he acted for it. There are two volumes in octavo, called his Life and Writings, but containing of the latter nothing but "seventy-four numbers of a periodical

Nature well known, no prodigies remain;
Comets are regular, and WHARTON plain.
Yet, in this search, the wisest may mistake, 210
If second qualities for first they take.

COMMENTARY.

Ver. 210. *Yet, in this search*, &c.] But here (from ver. 209 to 222.) he gives one very necessary caution, that, in developing the *Ruling Passion*, we must be careful not to mistake a *subsidiary* passion for the *principal;* which, without great attention, we may be

NOTES.

dical paper, called the True Briton," and his celebrated " Speech in the House of Lords on the third reading of the bill to inflict pains and penalties on Francis Lord Bishop of Rochester, May 15, 1723." It is a remarkable anecdote relating to this speech, that his Grace, then in opposition to the Court, went to Chelsea the day before the last debate on that prelate's affair, where, acting contrition, he professed being determined to work out his pardon at Court, by speaking against the bishop, in order to which he begged some hints. The minister was deceived, and went through the whole cause with him, pointing out where the strength of the argument lay, and where its weakness. The duke was very thankful, returned to town, passed the night in drinking, and, without going to bed, went to the House of Lords, where he spoke for the bishop, recapitulating, in the most masterly manner, and answering all that had been urged against him. His speech against the Ministry, two years before, on the affair of the South-Sea Company, had a fatal effect, Earl Stanhope answering it with so much warmth that he broke a blood-vessel and died. *Warton.*

Ver. 207. *'Twas all for fear, &c.*] To understand this, we must observe, that the *lust of general praise* made the person, whose character is here so admirably drawn, both *extravagant* and *flagitious;* his *madness* was to please the fools:

" *Women*

VARIATIONS.

Ver. 208.] In the former editions,

Nature well known, no *miracles* remain.

Altered as above, for very obvious reasons. *Warburton.*

When Catiline by rapine swell'd his store;
When Cæsar made a noble dame a whore;
In this the lust, in that the avarice,
Were means, not ends; ambition was the vice. 215

COMMENTARY.

be very liable to do; as the *subsidiary*, acting in support of the *principal*, has frequently all its vigour and much of its perseverance. This error has misled several both of the ancient and modern historians; as when they supposed *lust* and *luxury* to be characteristics of Cæsar and Lucullus; whereas, in truth, the *Ruling Passion* in both was *ambition;* which is so certain, that at whatsoever different time of the Republic these men had lived, their *ambition*, as the *Ruling Passion*, had been the same; but a different time had changed their *subsidiary* ones of *lust* and *luxury*, into their very opposites of *chastity* and *frugality*. 'Tis in vain, therefore, says our author, for the observer of human nature to fix his attention on the workman, if he all the while mistakes the scaffold for the building.

NOTES.

" *Women* and *fools* must like him, or he dies."
And his *crimes*, to avoid the censure of the knaves:
" 'Twas all for fear the *knaves* should call him fool."

Prudence and *Honesty* being the two qualities, in which fools and knaves are most interested, and consequently most industrious, to misrepresent. *Warburton.*

Ver. 213. *When Cæsar made*] This was Servilia, the sister of Cato, and the mother of Brutus. " How great," says St. Real, finely, " must have been her affliction at the death of Cæsar, her lover, massacred by the hand of her own son! who perhaps hoped to efface this suspicion of his bastardy by this very action! Historians have neglected to inform us of the fate of this most unhappy mistress and mother. Nothing could have been more interesting than the history of Servilia after this event. Next to Cleopatra, she was the most beloved of all Cæsar's mistresses; and Suetonius says, Cæsar bought for her a single jewel at the price of 50,000*l.* *Warton.*

Ver. 214. *In this the lust,*] The same passion excited Richelieu to

That very Cæsar, born in Scipio's days,
Had aim'd, like him, by chastity at praise.
Lucullus, when frugality could charm,
Had roasted turnips in the Sabine farm.
In vain th' observer eyes the builder's toil,
But quite mistakes the scaffold for the pile.
In this one Passion man can strength enjoy,
As fits give vigour, just when they destroy.

COMMENTARY.

Ver. 222. *In this one Passion, &c.*] But now it may be objected to our philosophic Poet, that he has indeed shewn *the true means* of

NOTES.

to throw up the dyke at Rochelle, and to dispute the prize of poetry with Corneille; whom to traduce was the surest method of gaining the affection of this ambitious minister; nay, who formed a design to be canonized as a saint. A perfect contrast to the character of Cardinal Fleury, who shewed that it was possible to govern a great state with moderate abilities and a mild temper. His ministry is impartially represented by Voltaire in the Age of Louis XIV. *Warton.*

Ver. 215. *ambition was the vice.*] *Pride, vanity,* and *ambition* are such bordering and neighbouring vices, and hold so much in common, that we generally find them going together; and, therefore, as generally mistake them for one another. This does not a little contribute to our confounding characters; for they are, in reality, very different and distinct; so much so, that it is remarkable, the three greatest men in Rome, and cotemporaries, possessed each of these passions separately, with very little mixture of the other two: the men I mean were Cæsar, Cato, and Cicero: for Cæsar had *ambition* without either vanity or pride; Cato had *pride* without ambition or vanity; and Cicero had *vanity* without pride or ambition. The aim of these passions too are very different. VANITY leads men, as it did Cicero, to seek homage from others: PRIDE, as it did Cato, to seek homage from one's self: and AMBITION, as in the case of Cæsar, to dispense with it from all, for the sake of solid interest. *Warburton.*

Time, that on all things lays his lenient hand,
Yet tames not this; it sticks to our last sand.
Consistent in our follies and our sins,
Here honest Nature ends as she begins.
Old politicians chew on wisdom past,
And totter on in business to the last;

COMMENTARY.

of coming to the *knowledge and characters of men*, by a *Principle* certain and infallible, when found; yet it is, by his own account of so difficult investigation, that its counterfeit (and it is always attended with one) may be easily mistaken for it. To remove this difficulty, therefore, and consequently the objection that arises from it, the Poet has given (from ver. 221 to 228.) one certain and infallible criterion of the *Ruling Passion:* which is this, that all the *other* passions, in the course of time, change and wear away; while *this* is ever constant and vigorous, and still going on from strength to strength, to the very moment of its demolishing the miserable machine which it has now, at length, over-worked. Of this great truth, the Poet (from ver. 227 to the end) gives various instances, in all the principal *Ruling Passions* of our nature, as they are to be found in the *Man of business*, the *Man of pleasure*, the *Epicure*, the *Parsimonious*, the *Toast*, the *Courtier*, the *Miser*, and the *Patriot;* which last instance, the Poet has had the art, under the appearance of Satire, to turn into the noblest compliment on the person to whom the Epistle is addressed.

NOTES.

Ver. 225. *it sticks to our last sand, &c.*] "M. de Lagny mourut le 12 Avril, 1734. Dans les derniers momens, ou il ne connoissoit plus aucun de ceux qui étoient autour de son lit, quelqu'un, pour faire une expérience philosophique, s'avisa de lui demander quel étoit le quarré de douze. Il repondit dans l'instant, et apparemment sans savoir qu'il repondit, cent quarante quatre."—*Fontenelle, Eloge de M. de Lagny.* *Warburton.*

Ver. 228. *Old politicians*] The strength and continuance of what our author calls the Ruling Passion, concerning which see ver. 174, and the notes, is strongly exemplified in these eight characters; namely, the Politician, the Debauchee, the Glutton, the Economist,

As weak, as earnest, and as gravely out, 230
As sober Lanesb'row dancing in the gout.

NOTES.

Economist, the Coquette, the Courtier, the Miser, and the Patriot. Of these characters, the most lively, because the most dramatic, are the fifth and seventh. There is true humour also in the circumstance of the frugal Crone, who blows out one of the consecrated tapers in order to prevent its wasting. Shall I venture to insert another example or two? An old usurer, lying in his last agonies, was presented by the priest with the crucifix. He opened his eyes a moment before he expired, attentively gazed on it, and cried out, "These jewels are counterfeit; I cannot lend more than ten pistoles upon so wretched a pledge." To reform the language of his country was the ruling passion of Malherbe. The priest, who attended him in his last moments, asked him if he was not affected with the description he gave him of the joys of heaven? "By no means," answered the incorrigible bard; "I desire to hear no more of them, if you cannot describe them in a purer style." Both these stories would have shone under the hands of Pope.

This doctrine of our author may be farther illustrated by the following passage of Bacon: "It is no less worthy to observe how little alteration, in good spirits, the approaches of death make, for they appear to be the same men till the last instant. Augustus Cæsar died in a compliment; Livia, conjugii nostri memor, vive et vale. Tiberius, in dissimulation; as Tacitus saith of him, Jam Tiberium vires et corpus, non dissimulatio deserebant. Vespasian, in a jest; Ut puto Deus fio. Galba, with a sentence; Feri, si ex re sit populi Romani; holding forth his neck. Septimus Severus, in a despatch; Adeste, si quid mihi restat agendum."

This Epistle concludes with a stroke of art worthy admiration. The Poet suddenly stops the vein of ridicule with which he was flowing, and addresses his friend in a most delicate compliment, concealed under the appearance of satire. *Warton.*

Ver. 231. *Lanesb'row*] An ancient Nobleman, who continued this practice long after his legs were disabled by the gout. Upon the death of Prince George of Denmark, he demanded an audience of the Queen, to advise her to preserve her health and dispel her grief by *dancing*. *Pope.*

Behold a reverend sire, whom want of grace
Has made the father of a nameless race,
Shov'd from the wall perhaps, or rudely press'd
By his own son, that passes by unbless'd:
Still to his wench he crawls on knocking knees,
And envies ev'ry sparrow that he sees.
A salmon's belly, Helluo, was thy fate;
The doctor call'd, declares all help too late;
"Mercy!" cries Helluo, "mercy on my soul!
Is there no hope!——Alas!——then bring the jowl."
The frugal crone, whom praying priests attend,
Still tries to save the hallow'd taper's end,
Collects her breath, as ebbing life retires,
For one puff more, and in that puff expires.
"Odious! in woollen! 'twould a saint provoke,"
Were the last words that poor Narcissa spoke;

NOTES.

Ver. 241. *then bring the jowl.*"] It is remarkable that a similar story may be found in the eighth book of Athenæus, concerning the poet Philoxenus, a writer of dithyrambics, who grew sick by eating a whole polypus, except the head; and who, when his physician told him he would never recover from his surfeit, called out, "Bring me then the head of the polypus." It is not here insinuated that Pope was a reader of Athenæus; but he evidently copied this ludicrous instance of gluttony from La Fontaine:

"Puis qu'il faut que je meure
Sans faire tant de façon,
Qu'on m'apporte tout à l'heure
Le reste de mon poisson." *Warton.*

Ver. 242. *The frugal crone, &c.*] A fact told him by Lady Bolingbroke, of an old Countess at Paris. *Warburton.*

Ver. 247. *the last words that poor Narcissa spoke;*] This story, as well as the others, is founded on fact, though the author had the

"No, let a charming chintz and Brussels lace
Wrap my cold limbs, and shade my lifeless face:
One would not, sure, be frightful when one's dead—
And—Betty—give this cheek a little red."
The courtier smooth, who forty years had shin'd
A humble servant to all human kind,
Just brought out this, when scarce his tongue could stir:
"If—where I'm going—I could serve you, Sir?"
"I give and I devise" (old Euclio said,
And sigh'd) "my lands and tenements to Ned."
Your money, Sir? "My money, Sir! what, all?
"Why,—if I must—(then wept) I give it Paul."
The Manor, Sir? "The Manor! hold," he cried,
Not that,—I cannot part with that"—and died.
And you, brave COBHAM! to the latest breath,
Shall feel your Ruling Passion strong in death:
Such in those moments as in all the past;
"Oh, save my country, Heaven!" shall be your last.

NOTES.

the goodness not to mention the names. Several attribute this in particular to a very celebrated actress, who, in detestation of the thought of being buried in woollen, gave these her last orders with her dying breath. *Pope.*

Ver. 251. *Betty*—] The Betty here mentioned was Mrs. Saunders, Mrs. Oldfield's friend and confidante; a good actress in parts of decayed widows and old maids. *Warton.*

Ver. 261. *and died.*] Sir William Bateman used those very words on his death-bed. No comic nor satiric writer has ever carried their descriptions of avarice or gluttony so far as what has happened in real life. Other vices have been exaggerated; these two never have been. *Warton.*

In the examples given by Pope in the foregoing Epistle, his intention is not merely to display the effects of the ruling passion, as implanted in us by nature, but also its effects, as modified by reason, habit, and circumstance. The ruling passion of Wharton was by nature love of admiration, or, as Pope calls it, the *lust of praise;* but, as modified by the different situations in which he was placed, he was alternately patriotic and profligate, pious and dissolute; according as the part he acted seemed most likely to secure the applause of those around him. In Narcissa the same passion displayed itself in the love of dress. In the characters of the debauchee, the glutton and the miser, the ruling passion is selfishness; the direction or particular modification of it, sensuality, gluttony, and avarice. In these instances the ruling passion has received an unfavourable direction; but it is at the same time evident, that both the desire of admiration and the love of ourselves are propensities that by proper management might be directed to the best and noblest purposes. On the other hand, we may presume the ruling passion of Lord Cobham, and of Fra. Paolo, whose expression Pope has adopted, to have been inflexibility or perseverance of character, which gave firmness and consistency to that love of their country which was ingrafted upon it. This was in fact one of those crops of honesty to which Pope has referred in his Essay on Man, (Ep. ii. l. 185) as founded on obstinacy, which would have afforded a similar support to any other particular tendency that might have been either accidentally or intentionally superinduced. This Epistle gave rise to a correspondence between Pope and Lord Cobham, which deserves insertion here; not only as it shews the friendly confidence that subsisted between them, but as it demonstrates that his Lordship understood the sense in which Pope considered the ruling passion, as modified by circumstances, and to which many of the instances he has given at the close of his Epistle, would not otherwise have applied.

" *Stowe, Nov.* 1, 1733.

" Though I have not modesty enough not to be pleased with your extraordinary compliment, I have wit enough to know how little I deserve it. You know all mankind are putting themselves upon the world for more than they are worth, and their friends are daily helping the deceit. But I am afraid I shall not pass for an absolute patriot. However, I have the honour of

having received a public testimony of your esteem and friendship; and am as proud of it as I could be of any advantage which could happen to me. As I remember, when I saw the *brouillon* of this Epistle, it was perplexed. You have now made it the contrary; and I think it is the clearest and the cleanest of all you have wrote. Don't you think you have bestowed too many lines on the old lecher. The instance itself is but ordinary, and I think should be shortened or changed. Thank you; and believe me to be most sincerely yours,

COBHAM."

That Pope followed his Lordship's advice and made an alteration in this character, is apparent from the next letter.

"I like your lecher better now 'tis shorter; and the glutton is a very good epigram. But they are both appetites that from nature we indulge, as well for her ends as our pleasure. A Cardinal, in his way of pleasure, would have been a better instance. What do you think of an old lady dressing her silver locks with pink, and ordering her coffin to be lined with white quilled satin with gold fringes? or Counsellor Vernon, retiring to enjoy himself with five thousand a year, which he had got, and returning to the Chancery, to get a little more, when he could not speak so loud as to be heard? or a judge turned out, coming again to the bar? I mean that *a passion or habit, that has not a natural foundation, falls in better with your subject*, than any of our natural wants, which in some degree we cannot avoid pursuing to the last; and if a man has spirits or appetite enough to take a bit of either kind at parting, you may condemn him, but you would be glad to imitate him. C."

EPISTLE II.

OF THE CHARACTERS OF WOMEN:

TO A LADY.

THE reader, perhaps, may be disappointed to find that this *Epistle*, which proposes the same subject with the preceding, is conducted on very different rules of composition; for instead of being disposed in the same logical method, and filled with the like philosophical remarks, it is wholly taken up in drawing a great variety of capital characters. But if he will reflect, that the *two sexes* make but *one species*, and consequently, the same characters of both must be studied and explained on the same principles, he will see, that when the Poet had done this, in the preceding Epistle, his business here was, not to repeat what he had already delivered, but only to verify and illustrate his doctrine, by every *view* of that perplexity of Nature in human characters, which *his* philosophy only can explain. If the reader therefore will but be at the pains to study these characters with any degree of attention, as they are drawn with a force of wit, sublimity, and true poetry, never hitherto equalled, one important particular (for which the Poet has artfully prepared him by the introduction) will very forcibly strike his observation; and it is this, that all the great strokes in the several characters of *Women* are not only infinitely perplexed and discordant, like those in *Men*, but absolutely inconsistent, and in a much higher degree contradictory. As strange as this may appear, yet he will see that the Poet has all the while strictly followed Nature, whose ways, we find by the former Epistle, are not a little mysterious; and a mystery this might have remained, had not our author explained it at ver. 207, where he shuts up his *characters* with this philosophical reflection:

> "In men, we *various ruling passions* find;
> In women, *two* almost divide the kind;
> Those, only fix'd, they first or last obey,
> The love of pleasure, and the love of sway."

If this account be true, we see the perpetual necessity (which is not the case in *Men*) that *Women* lie under of *disguising* their *ruling Passion*. Now the variety of arts employed to this purpose, must needs draw them into infinite contradictions, even in those *actions* from whence their general and obvious character is denominated. To verify this observation, let the reader examine all the characters here drawn, and try whether, with this key, he cannot disco-

ver that all their contradictions arise from a desire to *hide the ruling Passion.*

But this is not the worst. The Poet afterwards (from ver. 218 to 249.) takes notice of another mischief arising from this necessity of hiding their ruling Passions; which is, that generally the end of each is defeated, even there, where they are most violently pursued. For the necessity of hiding them inducing an habitual dissipation of mind, Reason, whose office it is to regulate the ruling passion, loses all its force and direction; and these unhappy victims to their principles, though with their attention still fixed upon them, are ever prosecuting the means destructive of their end, and thus become ridiculous in youth, and miserable in old age.

Let me not omit to observe the great beauty of the conclusion. It is an encomium on an imaginary lady, to whom the Epistle is addressed, and artfully turns upon the fact which makes the subject of the Epistle, *the contradiction of a woman's character*; in which contradiction he shews, all the lustre even of the best character consists:

> " And yet, believe me, good as well as ill,
> Woman's at best a *contradiction still*, &c." *Warburton.*

Bolingbroke, a judge of the subject, thought this Epistle the master-piece of Pope. But the bitterness of the satire is not always concealed in a laugh. The characters are lively, though uncommon. I scarcely remember one of them in our comic writers of the best order. The ridiculous is heightened by many strokes of humour, carried even to the borders of extravagance, as much as the two last lines of Boileau, quoted below. The female foibles have been the subject of perhaps more wit in every language, than any other topic that can be named. The sixth satire of Juvenal, though detestable for its obscenity, is undoubtedly the most witty of all his sixteen, and is curious for the picture it exhibits of the private lives of the Roman ladies. If this Epistle yields, in any respect, to the tenth satire of Boileau on the same subject, it is in the delicacy and variety of the transitions by which the French writer passes from one character to another, always connecting each with the foregoing. It was a common saying of Boileau, speaking of La Bruyère, that one of the most difficult parts of composition was the art of transition. That we may see how happily Pope has caught the manner of Boileau, let us survey one of his portraits: it shall be that of his learned lady:

" Qui s'offrira d'abord? c'est cette Sçavante,
Qu'estime Roberval, et que Sauveur frequente.
D'où vient qu'elle a l'œil troublé, et le teint si terni?
C'est que sur le calcul, dit-on, de Cassini,
Un Astrolabe en main, elle a dans sa goûtiere
A suivre Jupiter passé la nuit entière:
Gardons de la troubler. Sa science, je croi,
Aura pour s'occuper ce jour plus d'un emploi.
D'un nouveau microscope on doit en sa présence
Tantôt chez Dalancé faire l'expérience;
Puis d'une femme morte avec son embryon,
Il faut chez Du Verney voire la dissection."

None of Pope's female characters excel the Doris of Congreve in delicate touches of raillery and ridicule. *Warton.*

On the first publication of this Epistle it was preceded by an advertisement, in which the author declared that *no one character in it was drawn from the life;* an assertion which has of late been repeatedly pointed out to his discredit, as if he had on that occasion had recourse to subterfuge or falsehood; but it must be remembered that this Epistle, as first written and printed, did not contain the striking characters of *Philomedé*, *Atossa*, and *Cloe;* and that of the rest, not one of them has been appropriated with any reasonable degree of probability, to any individual. After these characters were inserted by Warburton in his edition, this advertisement was withdrawn.

It is much to be regretted that in discussing so extensive a subject as the characters of women, the author should have confined himself within such narrow limits, and should have dwelt rather on their follies and inconsistencies than on those traits of character, which, although not so strong as those of men, are equally distinguishable, and require, perhaps, a more delicate and therefore a more skilful pencil to display. But it must be remembered that neither his domestic situation and habits of life, nor the state of society in the sphere in which he moved, were, at that period, such as to enable him to appreciate the female character in its better and more accomplished forms. It may indeed be considered as a striking proof of the improvement which has taken place within the last century, that the characters represented in this poem, appear to us rather as gross caricatures, than as real

pictures; yet to the contemporaries of the poet, they were doubtless such as were acknowledged to have their resemblances in real life. What can we think of a series of portraits, in which the only person who has any pretensions even to *decency*, finds virtue "*too painful an endeavour*," and "*never reached one generous thought?*" The affectionate and friendly attachment entertained by Pope for the lady to whom it is addressed, (Mrs. Martha Blount) serves to counteract in some degree the unfavourable impressions which he seems to have entertained against the sex in general; and to her we are indebted for the beautiful lines at the close, which make us amends for the disappointment we experience, in finding so little that is agreeable, gathered from a field that offered so fair an opportunity for selection.

EPISTLE II.

OF THE CHARACTERS OF WOMEN.

ARGUMENT.

Of the Characters of Women only, as contradistinguished from the other sex. That these are yet more inconsistent and incomprehensible than those of men, of which instances are given, even from such characters as are plainest and most strongly marked; as in the affected, Ver. 7 *to* 21. *The* soft-natur'd, Ver. 29 *to* 37. *The* whimsical, Ver. 53 *to* 86. *The* wits *and* refiners, Ver. 87. *The* stupid *and* silly, Ver. 101. *The* capricious *and* passionate, Ver. 115. *The* decent *and* cold, Ver. 157. *How contrarieties run through them all. But though the particular characters of this sex are more various than those of men, the* general characteristic, *as to the ruling passion, is more uniform and confined. In what that lies, and whence it proceeds,* Ver. 207. *Men are best known in public life, Women in private,* Ver. 215. *What are the* aims, *and the* fate *of the sex, both as to* power *and* pleasure, Ver. 219. *Advice for their true interest,* Ver. 257. *The picture of an estimable woman, made up of the best kind of contrarieties,* Ver. 269, *&c.*

EPISTLE II.

OF THE CHARACTERS OF WOMEN.

NOTHING so true as what you once let fall,
" Most women have no characters at all."
Matter too soft a lasting mark to bear,
And best distinguish'd by black, brown, or fair.

NOTES.

Of the Characters of WOMEN.] There is nothing in Mr. Pope's works more highly finished, or written with greater spirit, than this Epistle: yet its success was in no proportion to the pains he took in composing it, or the effort of genius displayed in adorning it. Something he chanced to drop in a short advertisement prefixed to it, on its first publication, may perhaps account for the small attention the Public gave to it. He said, that *no one character in it was drawn from the life.* They believed him on his word; and expressed little curiosity about a satire in which there was nothing personal. *Warburton.*

Ver. 2. *Most women have no characters at all.*] Perhaps it had been juster only to say, that their *characters* are not so easily developed as those of men. He will have a better conception of this who has been entertained with an amusing trick in optics, where the artist produces you a board on which all kinds of colours seem to be cast at random, much in the manner of those on a Painter's uncleaned pallet. When placing upon it, in a certain position, a cylindrical steel mirror, the scattered lines are reduced to order, and an elegant form is reflected from the polished steel. A husband performs the office of this mirror; and draws out Nature from the confusion into which modern education often throws it. But whether under the form of a lamb or a tiger, a dove or a cat, could never be guessed from the disorder of the unreduced lines and unharmonious colouring. *Warburton.*

How many pictures of one nymph we view,
All how unlike each other, all how true!
Arcadia's Countess, here, in ermin'd pride,
Is there, Pastora by a fountain side.
Here Fannia, leering on her own good man,
And there, a naked Leda with a swan.
Let then the fair one beautifully cry,
In Magdalen's loose hair and lifted eye,
Or dress'd in smiles of sweet Cecilia shine,
With simpering angels, palms, and harps divine;
Whether the charmer sinner it, or saint it,
If folly grow romantic, I must paint it.

NOTES.

Ver. 5. *How many pictures*] The poet's purpose here is to shew, that the characters of women are generally inconsistent with themselves; and this he illustrates by so happy a similitude, that we see the folly described in it arises from that very principle which gives birth to this inconsistency of character. *Warburton.*

Ver. 7, 8. 10, &c. *Arcadia's Countess, Pastora by a fountain,—Leda with a swan,—Magdalen,—Cecilia*—] Attitudes in which several ladies affected to be drawn, and sometimes one lady in them all.—The Poet's politeness and complaisance to the sex is observable in this instance, amongst others, that whereas in the *Characters of Men* he has sometimes made use of real names, in the *Characters of Women* always fictitious. *Pope.*

But notwithstanding all the Poet's caution and complaisance, this general satire, or rather moral analysis of human nature, as it appears in the two sexes, will be always received very differently by them. The Men bear a general satire most heroically; the Women with the utmost impatience. This is not from any stronger consciousness of guilt, for I believe the sum of virtue in the female world does (from many accidental causes) far exceed the sum of virtue in the male; but from the fear that such representations may hurt the sex in the opinion of the men: whereas the men are not at all apprehensive that their follies or vices would prejudice them in the opinion of the women. *Warburton.*

Come then, the colours and the ground prepare!
Dip in the rainbow, trick her off in air;
Chuse a firm cloud, before it fall, and in it
Catch, ere she change, the Cynthia of this minute.
Rufa, whose eye quick-glancing o'er the park,
Attracts each light gay meteor of a spark,
Agrees as ill with Rufa studying Locke,
As Sappho's diamonds with her dirty smock;

NOTES.

Ver. 20. *Catch, ere she change, the Cynthia of this minute.*] Alluding in the expression to the precept of *Fresnoy*,

——" formæ veneres captando fugaces,"

Warburton.

"Like a dove's neck she shifts her transient charms."

Young, Sat. 5. *Warton.*

Ver. 21.] Instances of contrarieties, given even from such characters as are most strongly marked, and seemingly therefore most consistent: as, I. In the *affected*, Ver. 21, &c. *Pope.*

Ver. 21. *Rufa, whose eye*] This character of Rufa, and the succeeding ones of Silia, Papillia, Narcissa, and Flavia, are precisely and entirely in the style and manner of the portraits Young has given us in his Fifth Satire on Women. The pictures of Young are sketched with a lighter and more sportive pencil; those of our author with a firmer hand and a chaster manner. Pope put forth all his strength to excel his witty rival in this the best part of the Universal Passion; and he has succeeded accordingly. Both Pope and Boileau (see his tenth satire) have been censured for their severity on the fair sex. They have been reckoned as bad as Euripides; but surely they are nothing like an old comic poet, Eubulus, in a fragment preserved in that most entertaining book, the Excerpta ex Trag. et Comœd. of Grotius, 4to. p. 659. who, after mentioning Medea, Clytemnestra, and Phædra, suddenly stops, and wickedly pretends that his memory fails him in enabling him to mention any one good character among women. The ladies of France revenged themselves on Boileau, by saying he was made incapable of love and marriage by an accident that befel him in his early youth. *Warton.*

Or Sappho at her toilet's greasy task,
With Sappho fragrant at an evening mask:
So morning insects that in muck begun,
Shine, buzz, and fly-blow in the setting sun.
How soft is Silia! fearful to offend;
The frail one's advocate, the weak one's friend.
To her, Calista prov'd her conduct nice;
And good Simplicius asks of her advice.
Sudden, she storms! she raves! You tip the wink,
But spare your censure; Silia does not drink.
All eyes may see from what the change arose,
All eyes may see——a pimple on her nose.
Papillia, wedded to her amorous spark,
Sighs for the shades!—"How charming is a park!"
A park is purchas'd, but the fair he sees
All bath'd in tears—"Oh odious, odious trees!"
Ladies, like variegated tulips, show;
'Tis to their changes half their charms we owe;
Fine by defect, and delicately weak,
Their happy spots the nice admirer take.
'Twas thus Calypso once each heart alarm'd,
Aw'd without virtue, without beauty charm'd;

NOTES.

Ver. 23. *Agrees as ill*] This thought is expressed with great humour in the following stanza, said to mean Q. Caroline:

"Tho' Artemisia talks, by fits,
Of councils, classics, fathers, wits;
Reads Malbranche, Boyle, and Locke:
Yet in some things, methinks, she fails;
'Twere well, if she would pare her nails,
And wear a cleaner smock." *Warburton.*

Ver. 29 and 37.] II. Contrarieties in the *soft-natured.* *Pope.*

Ver. 45.] III. Contrarieties in the *cunning* and *artful.* *Pope.*

Her tongue bewitch'd as oddly as her eyes;
Less wit than mimic, more a wit than wise.
Strange graces still, and stranger flights she had,
Was just not ugly, and was just not mad;
Yet ne'er so sure our passion to create,
As when she touch'd the brink of all we hate.
Narcissa's nature, tolerably mild,
To make a wash, would hardly stew a child;
Has ev'n been prov'd to grant a lover's pray'r,
And paid a tradesman once to make him stare;
Gave alms at Easter, in a Christian trim,
And made a widow happy, for a whim.

NOTES.

Ver. 52. *As when she touch'd the brink of all we hate.*] Her charms consisted in the singular turn of her vivacity; consequently the stronger she exerted this vivacity, the more forcible was her attraction. But when her vivacity arose to that height in which it was most attractive, it was upon the *brink* of excess: the point where the delicacy of sensuality disappears, and all the coarseness of it stands exposed. *Warburton.*

Ver. 53.] IV. In the *whimsical.* *Pope.*

Ver. 54. *would hardly stew a child;*] This hyperbolical ridicule is carried to a great height, but in an image too disgusting. Juvenal, in his sixth satire, speaking of a great female talker, uses a pleasant hyperbole:

"Una laboranti poterit succurrere lunæ." *Warton.*

Ver. 57. *in a Christian trim,*] This is finely expressed; implying that her very charity was as much an exterior of Religion, as the ceremonies of the season. It was not even in a *Christian humour*, it was only *in a Christian trim*: not so much as *habit*, only *fashion.* *Warburton.*

Ver. 58. *And made a widow happy,*] There are some female characters sketched with exquisite delicacy and deep knowledge of nature, in a book where one would not expect to find them, Law's Christian Perfection. *Warton.*

Why then declare good-nature is her scorn,
When 'tis by that alone she can be borne?
Why pique all mortals, yet affect a name?
A fool to pleasure, yet a slave to fame:
Now deep in Taylor and the Book of Martyrs,
Now drinking citron with his Grace and Chartres:
Now conscience chills her, and now passion burns:
And atheism and religion take their turns;
A very heathen in the carnal part,
Yet still a sad, good Christian at her heart.
See Sin in state, majestically drunk;
Proud as a peeress, prouder as a punk;

NOTES.

Ver. 65. *Now conscience chills her,*] Madame de Montespan, during her criminal intercourse with Louis XIV. kept her Lents so strictly, that she used to have her bread weighed out to her. *Warton.*

Ver. 68. *Yet still a sad,*] I have been informed on good authority, that this character was designed for the then Duchess of Hamilton. *Warton.*

Ver. 69.] V. In the *lewd* and *vicious.* *Pope.*

Ver. 70. *Proud as a peeress,*] Designed for the Duchess of Marlborough, who so much admired Congreve; and after his death caused a figure in wax-work to be made of him, and placed frequently at her table. This connexion is particularly hinted at in ver. 76.

She sins with poets——

Our author's declaration, therefore, that no particular character was aimed at, is not true. *Warton.*

For *the want of* delicacy, the coarseness and the vulgarity of these lines, no wit can atone. Even Ruffhead here seems alarmed at the want of politeness of his favourite bard, though he expresses himself in terms more offensive upon the subject, than the poet! *Bowles.*

It is very extraordinary that the former editors of Pope should have asserted that the character of *Philomedé* was intended for the

Chaste to her husband, frank to all beside,
A teeming mistress, but a barren bride.
What then? let blood and body bear the fault,
Her head's untouch'd, that noble seat of thought:
Such this day's doctrine—in another fit
She sins with poets through pure love of wit.
What has not fired her bosom or her brain?
Cæsar and Tall-boy, Charles and Charlemagne.
As Helluo, late dictator of the feast,
The nose of hautgout, and the tip of taste,
Critiqued your wine, and analysed your meat,
Yet on plain pudding deign'd at home to eat:
So Philomedé, lecturing all mankind,
On the soft passion, and the taste refined,
The address, the delicacy—stoops at once,
And makes her hearty meal upon a dunce.

NOTES.

the Duchess of Marlborough, who is described a few pages afterwards under the striking character of *Atossa*, but they probably meant to refer to her daughter Henrietta, usually called the young duchess of Marlborough, to whom Congreve left the greater part of his fortune, and who erected a monument to him in Westminster Abbey, in the following extraordinary terms:

"Mr. William Congreve died Jan. the 19th, 1728, aged fifty-six, and was buried near this place; to whose most valuable memory, this monument is set up by Henrietta, Duchess of Marlborough, as a mark how dearly she remembers the happiness and honour she enjoyed in the sincere friendship of so worthy and honest a man, whose virtue, candour, and wit, gained him the love and esteem of the present age, and whose writings will be the admiration of the future."

VARIATIONS.

Ver. 77. *What has not fired, &c.*] In the MS.

In whose mad brain the mix'd ideas roll
Of Tall-boy's breeches, and of Cæsar's soul. *Warburton.*

Flavia's a wit, has too much sense to pray;
To toast our wants and wishes, is her way;
Nor asks of God, but of her stars, to give
The mighty blessing, "While we live, to live."
Then all for death, that opiate of the soul!
Lucretia's dagger, Rosamonda's bowl.
Say, what can cause such impotence of mind?
A spark too fickle, or a spouse too kind.
Wise wretch! with pleasures too refined to please;
With too much spirit to be e'er at ease:
With too much quickness ever to be taught;
With too much thinking to have common thought:
You purchase pain with all that joy can give,
And die of nothing but a rage to live.
Turn then from wits; and look on Simo's mate,
No ass so meek, no ass so obstinate:
Or her, that owns her faults, but never mends,
Because she's honest, and the best of friends:
Or her, whose life the church and scandal share,
For ever in a passion or a prayer:
Or her, who laughs at hell, but (like her Grace)
Cries, "Ah! how charming if there's no such place!"
Or who in sweet vicissitude appears,
Of mirth and opium, ratafie and tears,

NOTES.

Ver. 87. VI. Contrarieties in the *witty* and *refined*. *Pope.*

Ver. 107. *Or her who laughs at hell,*]

"Shall pleasures of a short duration chain
A Lady's soul in everlasting pain?
Will the Great Author us poor worms destroy
For now and then a sip of transient joy?
No; He's for ever in a smiling mood;
He's like themselves; or how could he be good?"

From Young, Sat. 5. The person Pope intended to ridicule was the Duchess of Montague. *Warton.*

The daily anodyne, and nightly draught,
To kill those foes to fair ones, time and thought.
Woman and fool are two hard things to hit;
For true no-meaning puzzles more than wit.
But what are these to great Atossa's mind? 115
Scarce once herself, by turns all womankind!
Who, with herself, or others, from her birth
Finds all her life one warfare upon earth:
Shines in exposing knaves, and painting fools,
Yet is, whate'er she hates and ridicules. 120

NOTES.

Ver. 115. *great Atossa's mind?*] Atossa is a name mentioned in Herodotus, and said to be a follower of Sappho. She was daughter of Cyrus and sister of Cambyses, and married Darius. She is also named in the Persæ of Æschylus. She is said to be the first that wrote Epistles. See Bentley on Phalaris, p. 385. and Dodwell against Bentley. *Warton.*

Ver. 120. *Yet is, whate'er she hates*] These spirited lines, that paint a singular character, are designed for the famous Duchess of Marlborough, whom Swift had also severely satirized in the Examiner. Her beauty, her abilities, her political intrigues, are sufficiently known. The violence of her temper frequently broke out into wonderful and ridiculous indecencies. In the last illness of the great Duke her husband, when Dr. Mead left his chamber, the Duchess, disliking his advice, followed him down stairs, swore at him bitterly, and was going to tear off his periwig. Her friend Dr. Hoadley, Bishop of Winchester, was present at this scene. These lines were shewn to her Grace as if they were intended for the portrait of the Duchess of Buckingham; but she soon stopped the person who was reading them to her, as the Duchess of Portland informed me, and called out aloud, "I cannot be so imposed upon: I see plainly enough for whom they are designed:" and abused Pope most plentifully on the subject, though she was afterwards reconciled to him, and courted him, and gave him a thousand pounds to suppress this portrait, which he accepted, it is said, by the persuasion of Mrs. M. Blount; and, after the Duchess's death, it was printed in a folio sheet, 1746, and afterwards here inserted

No thought advances, but her eddy brain
Whisks it about, and down it goes again.

NOTES.

inserted with those of Philomedé and Cloe. This is the greatest blemish* in our Poet's moral character. These three portraits are all animated with the most poignant wit. That of Cloe is particularly just and happy, who is represented as content merely and only to dwell in decencies, and satisfied to avoid giving offence; and is one of those many insignificant and useless beings,

" Who want, as thro' blank life they dream along,
Sense to be right, and passion to be wrong."

As says the ingenious author of the Universal Passion; a work that abounds in wit, observation on life, pleasantry, delicacy, urbanity, and the most well-bred raillery, without a single mark of spleen and ill-nature. These were the first characteristical satires in our language, and are written with an ease and familiarity of style very different from this author's other works. The four first were published in folio, in the year 1725; and the fifth and sixth, 1727. *Warton.*

The character of Atossa was certainly designed for the Duchess of Marlborough, and that it was shewn to her as intended for the Duchess of Buckingham may probably be true, but that Pope accepted a bribe to suppress it, is a calumny which requires no other refutation than the independence of his character and the uniform integrity of his life. The manner in which this story is brought forward by one of his editors as " *the greatest blemish in our poet's moral character,*" and represented by another, " IF IT IS FACT," as " the most shameful dereliction of every thing that was manly and honourable," is, to say the least of it, totally inconsistent with the character of an Editor, whose duty it is to defend his author against all accusations, not supported by competent and authentic *proof.* It does not appear that these vigorous and sarcastic lines were printed till after the death of both Pope and the Duchess, both of whom died in the same year, 1744.

VARIATIONS.

After Ver. 122. in the MS.

Oppress'd with wealth and wit, abundance sad!
One makes her poor, the other makes her mad. *Warburton.*

* A blemish!—call it rather, if it be fact, the most shameful dereliction of every thing that was manly and honourable. *Bowles.*

Full sixty years the world has been her trade,
The wisest fool much time has ever made.
From loveless youth to unrespected age,
No passion gratified, except her rage.
So much the fury still out-ran the wit,
The pleasure miss'd her, and the scandal hit.
Who breaks with her, provokes revenge from hell,
But he's a bolder man who dares be well.
Her every turn with violence pursued,
No more a storm her hate than gratitude:
To that each passion turns, or soon or late;
Love, if it makes her yield, must make her hate:
Superiors? death! and equals? what a curse!
But an inferior not dependant? worse.
Offend her, and she knows not to forgive;
Oblige her, and she'll hate you while you live:
But die, and she'll adore you—Then the bust
And temple rise—then fall again to dust.

NOTES.

Ver. 139. *But die, and she'll adore you*—] "It is seldom," says Mr. Walpole, "the public receives information on princes and favourites from the fountain-head. Flattery or invective is apt to pervert the relation of others. It is from their pens alone, whenever they are so gracious, like the lady in question, as to have a passion for fame and approbation, that we learn exactly how trifling, and foolish, and ridiculous their views and actions were, and how often the mischief they did proceeded from the most inadequate causes. We happen to know indeed, though he was no author, that the Duke of Buckingham's repulses, in very impertinent amours, involved King James and King Charles in national quarrels with Spain and France. From her Grace of Marlborough we may collect, that Queen Anne was driven to change her ministry, and, in consequence, the fate of Europe, because she dared to affect one bed-chamber woman as she had done another. The Duchess could not comprehend how the cousins, Sarah Jennings and

Last night, her Lord was all that's good and great;
A knave this morning, and his will a cheat.
Strange! by the means defeated of the ends,
By spirit robb'd of power, by warmth of friends,
By wealth of followers! without one distress, 145
Sick of herself through very selfishness!

NOTES.

and Abigail Hill, could ever enter into competition, though the one did but kneel to gather up the clue of favour which the other had haughtily tossed away, and which she could not recover by putting the Whole Duty of Man into the Queen's hands to teach her friendship. This favourite Duchess, who, like the proud Duke of Espernon, lived to brave the successors in a court where she had domineered, wound up her capricious life, where it seems she had begun it, with an apology for her conduct. The piece, though weakened by the prudence of those who were to correct it, though maimed by her Grace's own corrections, and though great part of it is rather the annals of a wardrobe than of a reign, yet has still curious anecdotes, and a few of those sallies of wit which fourscore years of arrogance could not fail to produce in so fantastic an understanding. And yet, by altering her memoirs as often as her will, she disappointed the public as much as her own family. However, the chief objects remain; and one sees exactly how Europe and the back-stairs took their places in her imagination and in her narrative. The Revolution left no impression on her mind, but of Queen Mary turning up bed-clothes; and the Protestant Hero, but of a selfish glutton who devoured a dish of peas from his sister-in-law. Little circumstances indeed convey the most characteristical ideas; but the choice of them may as often paint the genius of the writer as of the person represented. Mrs. Abigail Hill is not the only person transmitted to posterity with marks of the Duchess's resentment. Lord Oxford, "honest Jack Hill, the ragged boy, the Quebec General," and others, make the same figure in her history that they did in her mind:—sallies of passion, not to be wondered at in one who has sacrificed even the private letters of her mistress and benefactress. The Queen gave her a picture in enamel, set with diamonds. The Duchess took off the diamonds, and gave the picture to a Mrs. Higgins to be sold." *Warton.*

Atossa, curs'd with every granted pray'r,
Childless with all her children, wants an heir.
To heirs unknown, descends th' unguarded store,
Or wanders, heaven-directed, to the poor.
Pictures like these, dear Madam, to design,
Asks no firm hand, and no unerring line;
Some wandering touches, some reflected light,
Some flying stroke alone can hit 'em right:
For how could equal colours do the knack?
Cameleons who can paint in white and black?
"Yet Cloe sure was form'd without a spot."—
Nature in her then err'd not, but forgot.
"With every pleasing, every prudent part,
Say, what can Cloe want?"—She wants a heart.

NOTES.

Ver. 150. *Or wanders, heaven-directed, &c.*] Alluding and referring to the great principle of his Philosophy, of which he never loses sight, and which teaches, that Providence is incessantly turning the evils, arising from the follies and vices of men, to general good. *Warburton.*

Ver. 157. *Yet Cloe sure, &c.*] The purpose of the Poet in this character is important: it is to shew, that the politic or prudent government of the Passions is not enough to make a character amiable, nor even to secure it from being ridiculous, if the *end* of the government be not pursued; which is the free exercise of the *social* appetites, after the *selfish* ones have been subdued; for that if, though *reason* govern, the *heart* be never consulted, we interest ourselves as little in the fortune of such a character, as in any of the foregoing, which passions or caprice drive up and down at random. *Warburton.*

VARIATIONS.

After Ver. 148. in the MS.

This death decides, nor lets the blessing fall
On any one she hates, but on them all.
Curs'd chance! this only could afflict her more,
If any part should wander to the poor. *Warburton.*

She speaks, behaves, and acts just as she ought;
But never, never, reach'd one generous thought.
Virtue she finds too painful an endeavour,
Content to dwell in decencies for ever.
So very reasonable, so unmov'd,
As never yet to love, or to be lov'd.
She, while her lover pants upon her breast,
Can mark the figures on an Indian chest:
And when she sees her friend in deep despair,
Observes how much a chintz exceeds mohair.
Forbid it, heaven, a favour or a debt
She e'er should cancel!—but she may forget.
Safe is your secret still in Cloe's ear;
But none of Cloe's shall you ever hear.
Of all her dears she never slander'd one,
But cares not if a thousand are undone.
Would Cloe know if you're alive or dead?
She bids her footman put it in her head.
Cloe is prudent—Would you too be wise?
Then never break your heart when Cloe dies.
One certain portrait may, I grant, be seen,
Which heaven has varnish'd out, and made a *Queen:*

NOTES.

Ver. 180. *when Cloe dies.*] This highly-finished portrait was intended for Lady Suffolk, with whom, at the time he wrote it, he lived in a state of intimacy. At ver. 178, he alludes to a particular circumstance: Pope, being at dinner with her, heard her order her footman to put her in mind to send to know how Mrs. Blount, who was ill, had passed the night. *Warton.*

Ver. 181. *One certain portrait.—The same for ever, &c.*] This is entirely ironical, and conveys under it this general moral truth, that there is, in life, no such thing as *a perfect character.* *Warburton.*

It

THE SAME FOR EVER! and describ'd by all
With truth and goodness, as with crown and ball.
Poets heap virtues, painters gems at will,
And shew their zeal, and hide their want of skill.
'Tis well—but, artists! who can paint or write,
To draw the naked is your true delight.
That robe of quality so struts and swells,
None see what parts of nature it conceals:
Th' exactest traits of body or of mind,
We owe to models of a humble kind.
If QUEENSBERRY to strip there's no compelling,
'Tis from a handmaid we must take a Helen.
From Peer or Bishop 'tis no easy thing
To draw the man who loves his God, or King:
Alas! I copy (or my draught would fail)
From honest Mah'met, or plain Parson Hale.

NOTES.

It does not appear that Pope intended in this passage to convey any such insipid meaning. His object is to shew, that we must not attempt to judge of characters when surrounded by adventitious circumstances, nor take our ideas of women from *queens* and *duchesses*, who are always objects of flattery; when, in truth,

"A woman's seen in private life alone."

VARIATIONS.

After Ver. 198. in the MS.

Fain I'd in Fulvia spy the tender wife;
I cannot prove it on her, for my life:
And, for a noble pride, I blush no less,
Instead of Berenice to think on Bess.
Thus while immortal Cibber only sings,
(As * and H**y preach) for queens and kings,
The nymph, that ne'er read Milton's mighty line,
May, if she love and merit verse, have mine. *Warburton.*

But grant, in public, men sometimes are shown,
A woman's seen in private life alone:
Our bolder talents in full light display'd;
Your virtues open fairest in the shade.

NOTES.

Ver. 198. *Mah'met,*] Servant to the late King, said to be the son of a Turkish Bassa, whom he took at the siege of Buda, and constantly kept about his person. *Pope.*

Ver. 198. *plain Parson Hale.*] Dr. *Stephen Hale;* not more estimable for his useful discoveries as a natural Philosopher, than for his exemplary life and pastoral charity as a parish priest. *Warburton.*

Ver. 202. *Your virtues open*] To balance the many severe things our author has said of Women in this Epistle, I cannot forbear adding a passage from a writer, who has been usually thought by no means a friend to the fair sex. And it may occasion surprise to find such a passage from Dean Swift. "The degeneracy of conversation, with the pernicious consequences thereof upon our humours and dispositions, hath been owing, among other causes, to the custom arisen, for some time past, of excluding women from any share in our society, further than in parties at play, or dancing, or in the pursuit of an amour. I take the highest period of politeness in *England* (and it is of the same date in *France*) to have been the peaceable part of King *Charles* the First's reign; and from what we read of those times, as well as from the accounts I have formerly met with from some who lived in that court, the methods then used for raising and cultivating conversation were altogether different from ours. Several ladies, whom we find celebrated by the poets of that age, had assemblies at their houses, where persons of the best understanding, and of both sexes, met to pass the evenings in discoursing upon whatever agreeable subjects were occasionally started; and although we are apt to ridicule the sublime platonic notions they had, or personated, in love and friendship, I conceive their refinements were grounded upon reason, and that a little grain of the romance is no ill ingredient to preserve and exalt the dignity of human nature, without which it is apt to degenerate into every thing that is

Bred to disguise, in public 'tis you hide;
There, none distinguish 'twixt your shame or pride,
Weakness or delicacy; all so nice,
That each may seem a virtue, or a vice.
In men, we various Ruling Passions find;
In women, two almost divide the kind;
Those, only fix'd, they first or last obey,
The love of pleasure, and the love of sway.

NOTES.

is sordid, vicious, and low. If there were no other use in the conversation of ladies, it is sufficient that it would lay a restraint upon those odious topics of immodesty and indecencies into which the rudeness of our northern genius is so apt to fall." *Warton.*

Ver. 203. *Bred to disguise, in public 'tis you hide;*] There is something apparently exceptionable in the turn of this assertion, which makes their *disguising in public* the natural effect of their being *bred to disguise:* but if we consider that female education is the art of teaching, not to *be*, but to *appear*, we shall have no reason to find fault with the exactness of the expression. *Warburton.*

Ver. 207.] The former part having shewn, that the *particular characters* of Women are more various than those of Men, it is nevertheless observed, that the *general* characteristic of the sex, as to the *ruling Passion*, is more uniform. *Pope.*

Ver. 208. *In women, two*] I cannot think our author would suffer by a minute comparison of this Epistle with the most shining and applauded morsels of the tenth satire of Boileau, which undoubtedly are his portraits of the affected female Pedant, ver. 439. The Gamester, ver. 215. His Jealous Lady, ver. 378. The Haughty Lady of Family, ver. 470. And above all, what Boileau himself valued most, the Devout Lady and her Director, ver. 558. Boileau was severely attacked for this Epistle by Perrault; but was powerfully defended by the great Arnauld, a rigid moralist, and also by La Bruyère. *Warton.*

VARIATIONS.

Ver. 207.] In the first edition:

In several men, we several Passions find;
In women, two almost divide the kind. *Warburton.*

That, Nature gives; and where the lesson taught
Is but to please, can pleasure seem a fault?
Experience, this; by Man's oppression curs'd,
They seek the second not to lose the first.
Men, some to business, some to pleasure take;
But every woman is at heart a rake;
Men, some to quiet, some to public strife;
But every lady would be queen for life.
Yet mark the fate of a whole sex of queens!
Power all their end, but beauty all the means:
In youth they conquer, with so wild a rage,
As leaves them scarce a subject in their age:
For foreign glory, foreign joy, they roam;
No thought of peace or happiness at home.
But wisdom's triumph is well-tim'd retreat,
As hard a science to the fair as great!
Beauties, like tyrants, old and friendless grown,
Yet hate repose, and dread to be alone,
Worn out in public, weary every eye,
Nor leave one sigh behind them when they die.

NOTES.

Ver. 211.] This is occasioned partly by their *Nature*, partly by their *Education*, and in some degree by *Necessity*. *Pope.*

Ver. 216. *But every woman is at heart a rake:*] This line has given offence: but in behalf of the Poet we may observe, that what he says amounts only to this: Some men take to business, some to pleasure; but every woman would willingly make *pleasure her business;* which being the proper periphrasis of a *rake*, he uses that word, but of course includes in it no more of the rake's ill qualities than is implied in this definition, of *one who makes pleasure his business.* *Warburton.*

Ver. 219.] What are the *Aims* and the *Fate* of this sex.—I. As to *Power*. *Pope.*

Pleasures the sex, as children birds, pursue,
Still out of reach, yet never out of view;
Sure, if they catch, to spoil the toy at most,
To covet flying, and regret when lost:
At last, to follies youth could scarce defend,
It grows their age's prudence to pretend;
Asham'd to own they gave delight before,
Reduc'd to feign it, when they give no more:
As hags hold Sabbaths less for joy than spite,
So these their merry, miserable night:
Still round and round the ghosts of beauty glide,
And haunt the places where their honour died.
See how the world its veterans rewards!
A youth of frolics, an old age of cards;

NOTES.

Ver. 229. *Worn out in public,*] Copied from Young, Satire 5. written eight years before this Epistle appeared:

" Worn in the public eye, give cheap delight
To throngs, and tarnish to the sated sight." *Warton.*

Ver. 231.]——II. As to *Pleasure.* *Pope.*

Ver. 234. *To covet flying,*] It is impossible not to recollect the witty simile of Young, Sat. 5.

" Pleasures are few, and fewer we enjoy;
Pleasure, like quicksilver, is bright and coy;
We strive to grasp it with our utmost skill,
Still it eludes us, and it glitters still;
If seiz'd at last, compute your mighty gains,
What is it, but rank poison in your veins?" *Warton.*

Ver. 244. *A youth of frolics,*] The antithesis, so remarkably strong in these lines, was a very favourite figure with our Poet. He has indeed used it but in too many parts of his works; nay, even in his translation of the Iliad, where it ought not to have been admitted, and which Dryden has but rarely used in his Virgil. Our author seldom writes many words together without an antithesis. It must be allowed sometimes, to add strength to

Fair to no purpose, artful to no end,
Young without lovers, old without a friend;
A fop their passion, but their prize a sot;
Alive, ridiculous; and dead, forgot!
Ah! Friend! to dazzle let the vain design;
To raise the thought, and touch the heart, be thine!
That charm shall grow, while what fatigues the ring,
Flaunts and goes down, an unregarded thing:

NOTES.

a sentiment by an opposition of images: but, too frequently repeated, it becomes tiresome and disgusting. Rhyme has almost a natural tendency to betray a writer into it: but the purest authors have despised it, as an ornament pert and puerile and epigrammatic. Seneca, Pliny, Tacitus, and later authors, abound in it. Quintilian has sometimes used it with much success, as when he speaks of style; "magna, non nimia; sublimis, non abrupta; severa, non tristis; læta, non luxuriosa; plena, non tumida." And sometimes Tully; as, "vicit pudorem libido, timorem audacia, rationem amentia." But these writers fall into this mode of speaking but seldom, and do not make it their constant and general manner. Those moderns, who have not acquired a true taste for the simplicity of the best ancients, have generally run into a frequent use of point, opposition, and contrast. They who begin to study painting, are struck at first with the pieces of the most vivid colouring; they are almost ashamed to own that they do not relish and feel the modest and reserved beauties of Raphael. The exact proportion of St. Peter's at Rome occasions it not to appear so great as it really is. It is the same in writing; but by degrees we find that Lucan, Martial, Juvenal, Q. Curtius, and Florus, and others of that stamp, who abound in figures that contribute to the false florid, in luxuriant metaphors, in pointed conceits, in lively antitheses, unexpectedly darting forth, are contemptible for the very causes which once excited our admiration. It is then we relish Terence, Cæsar, and Xenophon. *Warton.*

Ver. 249.] Advice for their true interest. *Pope.*

So when the sun's broad beam has tir'd the sight,
All mild ascends the moon's more sober light,
Serene in virgin modesty she shines,
And unobserv'd the glaring orb declines.

Oh! blest with temper, whose unclouded ray,
Can make to-morrow cheerful as to-day;
She, who can love a sister's charms, or hear
Sighs for a daughter, with unwounded ear;
She, who ne'er answers till a husband cools,
Or, if she rules him, never shows she rules,
Charms by accepting, by submitting sways,
Yet has her humour most, when she obeys;
Lets fops or fortune fly which way they will;
Disdains all loss of tickets, or codille;
Spleen, vapours, or small-pox, above them all,
And mistress of herself, tho' china fall.

And yet, believe me, good as well as ill,
Woman's at best a contradiction still.
Heaven, when it strives to polish all it can
Its last best work, but forms a softer man;
Picks from each sex, to make the fav'rite blest,
Your love of pleasure, our desire of rest;
Blends, in exception to all general rules,
Your taste of follies, with our scorn of fools;
Reserve with frankness, art with truth allied,
Courage with softness, modesty with pride;

NOTES.

Ver. 268. *though china fall.*] Addison has touched this subject with his usual exquisite humour, in the Lover, No. 10. p. 291. of his works, 4to. quoting Epictetus to comfort a lady that labours under this heavy calamity. *Warton.*

Fix'd principles, with fancy ever new;
Shakes all together, and produces——You.
Be this a woman's fame: with this unblest,
Toasts live a scorn, and queens may die a jest.
This Phœbus promis'd (I forget the year)
When those blue eyes first open'd on the sphere;
Ascendant Phœbus watch'd that hour with care,
Averted half your parent's simple prayer;
And gave you beauty, but denied the pelf
That buys your sex a tyrant o'er itself.

NOTES.

Ver. 285, &c. *Ascendant Phœbus watch'd that hour with care,*
Averted half your parents' simple pray'r;
And gave you beauty, but denied the pelf]

The poet concludes his epistle with a fine *Moral*, which deserves the serious attention of the public. It is this: that all the extravagances of these vicious characters here described, are much inflamed by a wrong education, hinted at in ver. 203; and that even the *best* are rather secured by a *good natural*, than by the prudence and providence of parents; which observation is conveyed under the sublime classical machinery of Phœbus in the ascendant, watching the natal hour of his favourite, and averting the ill effects of her parents' mistaken fondness. For Phœbus, as the God of wit, confers genius, and, as one of the astronomical influences, defeats the adventitious bias of education.

In conclusion, the great moral from both these Epistles together is, that the two rarest things in all nature are, a DISINTERESTED MAN, and a REASONABLE WOMAN. *Warburton.*

It may be doubted whether the preceding note, like some others of the same learned critic, does not tend to obscure rather than to elucidate the sense of the author; who meant nothing more in this passage, than by an elegant fiction to reconcile the Lady to whom it is addressed to her lot in life, by the consideration, that sense and good humour, with the additional advantage of a Poet to celebrate them, were preferable to *riches*. The MORAL of this Epistle

The gen'rous God, who wit and gold refines,
And ripens spirits as he ripens mines,
Kept dross for Duchesses, the world shall know it
To you gave sense, good-humour, and a poet.

NOTES.

Epistle is, that all female accomplishments, founded on pretensions to *admiration*, to *wit*, to *piety*, to *spirit*, and even to *superiority of talents* and *ability*, as exemplified in a series of female characters, are inadequate either to conciliate esteem or to confer happiness, without those higher endowments of the mind which alone can "raise the thought and touch the heart;" and which produce that "*temper*," which will display itself in all the relations of domestic life, and even render a woman

"Mistress of herself, tho' china fall!"

Its connexion with the preceding Epistle consists in its being a further illustration of the poet's idea of the *ruling passion*, which in woman is either the love of pleasure or the love of sway; the unrestrained indulgence of which inevitably leads to the unhappy consequences so strikingly displayed at ver. 219, &c. whilst she who employs her *reason* and *judgment in the proper correction of these propensities*, or in other words, who cultivates her *understanding* and *her heart*, will continue to charm,

"while what fatigues the ring,
Flaunts and goes down, an unregarded thing."

EPISTLE III.

OF THE USE OF RICHES:

TO

ALLEN, LORD BATHURST.

THE following original Letter of Lord Bathurst to Pope, will shew the great respect and kindness he had for him. It is taken from the autographs of the Odyssey and Iliad, preserved in the British Museum, which are written chiefly on the backs of various letters: *Bowles.*

" I will not fail to attend Mrs. Howard upon Marble Hill next Tuesday; but Lady Bathurst is not able to come at this time, which is no small mortification to her. I hope I shall persuade John Gay to come hither to me, for I really think such a wintry summer as this should be passed altogether in society by a chimney-corner; but I believe I should not lie, if I assured you that I would quit the finest walk on the finest day in the finest garden, to have your company at any time. This is saying a great deal more than is commonly understood by one. I am

Your most faithful humble servant,

BATHURST."

"NONE of my works," said Pope to Mr. Spence, "was more laboured than my Epistle on the Use of Riches." It does indeed abound in knowledge of life, and in the justest satire. It has also the additional merit of touching on a subject that never occurred to former satirists. And though it was difficult to say any thing new about avarice, "a vice that has been so pelted," says Cowley, "with good sentences," yet has our author done it so successfully, that this Epistle, together with Lord Bacon's thirty-third Essay, contains almost all that can be said on the use and abuse of riches, and the absurd extremes of avarice and profusion. But our Poet has enlivened his precepts with so many various characters, pictures, and images, as may entitle him to claim the preference over all that have treated on this tempting subject, down from the time of the Plutus of Aristophanes. That very lively and amiable old nobleman, the late Lord Bathurst, told me, "that he was much surprised to see, what he had with repeated pleasure so often read as an Epistle addressed to himself, in this edition converted into a dialogue, in which," said he, "I perceive I make but a shabby and indifferent figure, and contribute very little to the spirit of the dialogue, if it must be a dialogue; and I hope I had generally more to say for myself in the many charming conversations I used to hold with Pope and Swift, and my old poetical friends." In truth we may make the same objection that Perrault is said to have done to the tenth satire of Boileau; "l'auteur oublie quelquefois que c'est un dialogue qu'il compose." I cannot forbear adding, that Cicero gives to his friend Atticus a very small share in those dialogues in which he himself is represented as a speaker. *Warton.*

As the first of these moral Epistles is a commentary on the idea of the Ruling Passion as it is stated in the Essay on Man, so the ensuing Epistle may be considered as an illustration of another favorite doctrine of the poet; that by the arrangements and course of Providence the general order of things is not only maintained, but the errors and even the vices of mankind are either counteracted, or converted into positive good:

" Each individual seeks a different goal,
But heaven's great view is one, and that the whole;
That counteracts each folly and caprice;
That disappoints th' effect of every vice."

This truth he here undertakes further to elucidate by considering the use and abuse of riches, in a dialogue between himself and Lord Bathurst, to whom it is addressed, and in which the part taken by his Lordship serves (as might be expected) rather to elicit the sentiments of the Poet than to display his own. In the prosecution of this plan, he first considers what have been the consequences to society of the introduction of a medium of exchange for the necessaries and commodities of life, which is capable of being accumulated in large masses. This medium he denominates *gold*, (rather as a sign of value in general, than in its peculiar sense) and the accumulation of it is characterized as *riches*. He could not however but perceive, that this sign of value might exist in any other form; and after shewing by a succession of the most lively images the advantages and disadvantages of *gold*, he adverts to the great extension of this medium of exchange by the means of *paper-credit*, the effects of which he describes with infinite spirit and vivacity; contrasting the rapidity with which " our fates and fortunes are scattered," and the ends of corruption obtained, with the inconveniences that must have arisen, when these purposes could only be effected by an actual interchange of the *substantial* articles of life. Having thus adverted to the *uses* and *abuses* of riches, he next refers to the different motives by which men are led to accumulate; all which he considers as the effects of the Ruling Passion, which, *when uncontrolled by reason*, are little short of *insanity* or *madness*. (See Warburton's note on ver. 151.)

He then enters on his principal subject, and demonstrates that the evils that accrue to society from the effects even of the most sordid avarice, are alleviated, obviated, or rendered positively beneficial to others, by the course of Providence; which, both in the natural and moral world, *renders all extremes subservient to general use*. This is strikingly illustrated in the example of Cotta and his son, in which the wealth accumulated by the father goes, by the extravagance of his heir, to the service of his country; (but see Note on ver. 218). After having thus exemplified the abuses of

riches, he undertakes to demonstrate the proper use of them; which he exhibits in the character of the Man of Ross, whom he has immortalized by the noblest monument that ever genius raised to virtue. The remaining characters of Villars, Sir John Cutler, and Sir Balaam, are intended to enforce what has before been stated; and serve to demonstrate, not only the "impotence of wealth," but the pernicious consequences to which it so frequently leads.

EPISTLE III.

OF THE USE OF RICHES.

ARGUMENT.

THAT it is known to few, most falling into one of the extremes, Avarice *or* Profusion, Ver. 1, &c. *The point discussed, whether the invention of Money has been more commodious, or pernicious to Mankind,* Ver. 21 to 77. *That Riches either to the* Avaricious *or the* Prodigal, *cannot afford Happiness, scarcely Necessaries,* Ver. 89 to 160. *That Avarice is an absolute frenzy, without an End or Purpose,* Ver. 113, &c. 152. *Conjectures about the Motives of avaricious Men,* Ver. 121 to 153. *That the conduct of Men, with respect to Riches, can only be accounted for by the* Order of Providence, *which works the general good out of extremes, and brings all to its great end by perpetual revolutions,* Ver. 161 to 178. *How a* Miser *acts upon Principles which appear to him reasonable,* Ver. 179. *How a* Prodigal *does the same,* Ver. 199. *The due Medium, and true use of Riches,* Ver. 219. *The* Man *of* Ross, Ver. 250. *The fate of the* Profuse *and the* Covetous, *in two examples; both miserable in Life and in Death,* Ver. 300, &c. *The Story of Sir* Balaam, Ver. 339 to the End.

EPISTLE III.

OF THE USE OF RICHES.

WITH THE COMMENTARY OF WILLIAM WARBURTON, D. D.

P. WHO shall decide, when Doctors disagree,
And soundest casuists doubt, like you and me?
You hold the word, from Jove to Momus given,
That man was made the standing jest of Heaven;

COMMENTARY.

Ver. 1. *Who shall decide, &c.*] The address of the *introduction* (from ver. 1 to 21.) is remarkable. The Poet represents himself, and the noble Lord, his friend, as in a free conversation, philosophizing on the *final cause of Riches;* and it proceeds by way of dialogue, which most writers have employed to hide the want of method; our author uses it only to soften and enliven the dryness and severity of it. *You* (says the Poet)

"— hold the word from Jove to Momus given,——
But I, who think more highly of our kind,——
Opine, that Nature," &c.

As

NOTES.

EPISTLE III.] This Epistle was written after a violent outcry against our author, on suspicion that he had ridiculed a worthy nobleman merely for his wrong taste. He justified himself upon that article in a letter to the Earl of Burlington; at the end of which are these words: "I have learnt that there are some who would rather be wicked than ridiculous; and therefore it may be safer to attack vices than follies. I will therefore leave my betters in the quiet possession of their idols, their groves, and their high places, and change my subject from their pride to their meanness, from their vanities to their miseries; and as the only certain way to avoid misconstructions, to lessen offence, and not to multiply ill natured applications, I may probably, in my next, make use of real names instead of fictitious ones." *Pope.*

And gold but sent to keep the fools in play,
For some to heap, and some to throw away.
But I, who think more highly of our kind,
(And surely, Heaven and I are of a mind,)
Opine, that Nature, as in duty bound,
Deep hid the shining mischief under ground:
But when by Man's audacious labour won,
Flam'd forth this rival to its sire, the sun,
Then careful Heaven supplied two sorts of men,
To squander these, and those to hide again.
Like Doctors thus, when much dispute has pass'd,
We find our tenets just the same at last.
Both fairly owning, Riches, in effect,
No grace of Heaven, or token of th' Elect;
Given to the fool, the mad, the vain, the evil,
To Ward, to Waters, Chartres, and the Devil.

COMMENTARY.

As much as to say, "You, my Lord, hold the subject we are upon, as fit only for SATIRE; I, on the contrary, esteem it amongst the high points of Philosophy, and profound ETHICS. But as we both agree in the main *principle*, that *Riches were not given for the reward of virtue, but for very different purposes*, (see *Essay on Man*, Ep. iv.) let us compromise the matter, and consider the subject both under your idea and mine conjointly, *i. e. satirically* and *philosophically*."—And this, in fact, we shall find to be the true character of this poem; which is of a *Species* peculiar to itself; partaking equally of the nature of his *Ethic Epistles* and of his *Satires*, just as the best pieces of *Lucian* arose from a combination of the Dialogues of *Plato*, and the Scenes of *Aristophanes*. This it will be necessary to carry with us, if we would see either the *wit* or the *reasoning* of this Epistle in their true light.

NOTES.

Ver. 20.] JOHN WARD of Hackney, Esq. Member of Parliament, being prosecuted by the Duchess of Buckingham, and convicted

B. What Nature wants, commodious gold bestows;
'Tis thus we eat the bread another sows.

COMMENTARY.

Ver. 21. *What Nature wants, &c.*] Having thus settled the terms of the *debate*, before he comes to the *main question*, the *Use of Riches*, it was necessary to discuss a *previous* one, whether, indeed

NOTES.

victed of Forgery, was first expelled the House, and then stood on the pillory on the 17th of March, 1727. He was suspected of joining in a conveyance with Sir John Blunt, to secrete fifty thousand pounds of that Director's estate, forfeited to the South Sea Company by Act of Parliament. The Company recovered the fifty thousand pounds against Ward; but he set up prior conveyances of his real estate to his brother and son, and concealed all his personal, which was computed to be one hundred and fifty thousand pounds. These conveyances being also set aside by a bill in Chancery, Ward was imprisoned, and hazarded the forfeiture of his life, by not giving in his effects till the last day, which was that of his examination. During his confinement, his amusement was to give poison to dogs and cats, and see them expire by slower or quicker torments. To sum up the *worth* of this gentleman, at the several æras of his life: At his standing in the Pillory, he was *worth above two hundred thousand pounds;* at his commitment to prison, he was *worth one hundred and fifty thousand;* but has been since so far diminished in his reputation, as to be thought a *worse man* by *fifty or sixty thousand.* *Pope.*

Fr. Chartres, a man infamous for all manner of vices. When he was an ensign in the army, he was drummed out of the regiment for a cheat; he was next banished Brussels, and drummed out of Ghent, on the same account. After a hundred tricks at the gaming-tables, he took to lending of money at exorbitant interest and on great penalties, accumulating premium, interest, and capital into a new capital, and seizing to a minute when the payments became due; in a word, by a constant attention to the vices, wants, and follies of mankind, he acquired an immense fortune. His house was a perpetual bawdy-house. He was twice condemned for rapes, and pardoned; but the last time not without imprisonment in Newgate, and large confiscations. He died in

P. But how unequal it bestows, observe!
'Tis thus we riot, while who sow it starve.

COMMENTARY.

deed, they be, upon the whole, *useful to mankind or not;* (which he does from ver. 20 to 77.). It is commonly observed, says he, (from ver. 20 to 35.), *That gold most commodiously supplies the wants of Nature:* "Let us first consider the proposition in *general*, both in MATTER and EXPRESSION; 1. As it regards the *supply;* and this we shall find to be very *unequal:* 2. As it regards the *wants;* and these, we shall see, are very *ambiguous;* under that term, all our fantastic and imaginary, as well as real, wants being comprized. Hitherto the use is not very apparent. Let us in the second place, therefore, consider the proposition in *particular*, or how

NOTES.

in Scotland in 1731, aged 62. The populace at his funeral raised a great riot, almost tore the body out of the coffin, and cast dead dogs, &c. into the grave along with it. The following Epitaph contains his character very justly drawn by Dr. Arbuthnot:

HERE continueth to rot
The Body of FRANCIS CHARTRES,
Who, with an INFLEXIBLE CONSTANCY,
and INIMITABLE UNIFORMITY of Life,
PERSISTED,
In spite of AGE and INFIRMITIES,
In the Practice of EVERY HUMAN VICE,
Excepting PRODIGALITY and HYPOCRISY:
His insatiable AVARICE exempted him from the first,
His matchless IMPUDENCE from the second.
Nor was he more singular
in the undeviating *Pravity* of his *Manners*,
Than successful
in *accumulating* WEALTH;
For, without TRADE or PROFESSION,
Without TRUST of PUBLIC MONEY,
And without BRIBE-WORTHY Service,
He acquired, or more properly created,
A MINISTERIAL ESTATE.
He was the only Person of his Time,

Who

What Nature wants (a phrase I much distrust) 25
Extends to luxury, extends to lust:

COMMENTARY.

how gold supplies the wants of nature both in private and public life: 1. As to *private;* it aids us, indeed, to support life; but, at the same time, it hires the assassin. 2. As to *Society;* it may procure friendships and extend trade; but it allures robbers, and corrupts our acquaintance. 3. As to *Government;* it pays the guards necessary for the support of public liberty; but it may, with the same ease, bribe a senate to overturn it."

The matter, therefore, being thus problematical, the Poet, instead of formally balancing between the good and ill, chuses to leave this *previous question* undetermined (as Tacitus had done before him; where, speaking of the ancient *Germans*, he says, *Argentum et aurum propitii aut irati Dii negaverint dubito;*) and falls at once upon what he esteems the principal of these abuses, *public corruption.*

For, having in the last instance, of the *Use of Riches* in Government

NOTES.

Who could CHEAT without the Mask of HONESTY,
Retain his Primeval MEANNESS
When possessed of TEN THOUSAND a year,
And having daily deserved the GIBBET for what he *did*,
Was at last condemned to it for what he *could* not *do*.
Oh indignant Reader!
Think not his Life useless to Mankind!
PROVIDENCE connived at his execrable Designs,
To give to after-ages
A conspicuous PROOF and EXAMPLE,
Of how small Estimation is EXORBITANT WEALTH
In the sight of GOD,
By his bestowing it on the most UNWORTHY OF ALL MORTALS.
Pope.

This fine reflection has been much admired; it is also found in La Bruyère; but he evidently borrowed it from Seneca: "Non sunt divitiæ bonum; nullo modo magis potest Deus concupita traducere, quam si ille ad perpessimos defert, ab optimis abigit."
Cur Bonis Viris Mala fiunt: cap. v.

This

Useful, I grant, it serves what life requires,
But dreadful too, the dark assassin hires.

COMMENTARY.

ment, spoken of *venal Senates*, he goes on to lament the mischief as desperate and remediless; gold, by its power to corrupt with *secrecy*, defeating all the efforts of public spirit, whether exerted in the courage of heroes, or in the wisdom of patriots.

It is true, indeed, (continues the Poet, from ver. 34 to 49.), the very weight of the bribe has sometimes detected the corruption:

" From the crack'd bag the dropping guinea spoke," &c.

But this inconvenience was soon repaired, by the invention of *paper credit;* whose dreadful effects on public liberty he describes in all the colouring of his poetry, heightened by the warmest concern for virtue; which now makes him willing to give up, as it were, the

NOTES.

This passage was pointed out to me by an amiable friend, equally skilled in all parts of useful and ornamental learning in matters both of taste and philosophy, Dr. Heberden.

The figure of Chartres is introduced by Hogarth in the first plate of his Rake's Progress, and behind him stands a man whom he always had about him, and who was his pimp. *Warton.*

This Gentleman, it was said, was *worth seven thousand pounds a year* estate in land, and about *one hundred thousand* in money. *Pope.*

Mr. Waters, the third of these worthies, was a man no way resembling the former in his military, but extremely so in his civil capacity; his great fortune having been raised by the like diligent attendance on the necessities of others. But this gentleman's history must be deferred till his death, when his *worth* may be known more certainly. *Pope.*

Ver. 21. *What Nature wants,* commodious *gold bestows;*] The epithet *commodious* gives us the very proper idea of a *bawd* or *pander;* and this thought produced the two following lines, which were in all the former editions, but, for their bad reasoning, omitted:

" And if we count amongst the needs of life
Another's toil, why not another's wife?" *Warburton.*

B. Trade it may help, society extend.
P. But lures the pirate, and corrupts the friend. 30
B. It raises armies in a nation's aid.
P. But bribes a senate, and the land's betray'd.
In vain may heroes fight, and patriots rave;
If secret gold sap on from knave to knave.

COMMENTARY.

the *previous question*, in a passionate wish (from ver. 48 to 59.) for the return of that incumbrance attendant on public corruption, before the so *common* use of money.

And, pleased with this flattering idea, he goes on (from ver. 58 to 77.) to shew the other advantages which would accrue from riches only *in kind;* these are, that neither *Avarice* could contrive to hoard, nor *Prodigality* to lavish, in so mad and boundless a manner as they do at present. Here he shews particularly, in a fine ironical description of the embarras on *Gaming*, how naturally it tends to eradicate that execrable vice.

But this whole *digression* (from ver. 34 to 77.) has another very uncommon beauty; for, at the same time that it arises naturally from the *last* consideration, in the debate of the *previous question*, it artfully denounces, in our entrance on the *main question*, the principal topics intended to be employed for the dilucidation of it; namely, AVARICE, PROFUSION, and PUBLIC CORRUPTION.

NOTES.

Ver. 33. *and patriots rave;*] The character of modern patriots was, in the opinion of our Poet, very equivocal; as the name was undistinguishably bestowed on every one who was in opposition to the court; of this he gives a hint in ver. 139, of this Epistle. And agreeable to these sentiments is the equivocal turn of his expression here,

" In vain—may patriots rave;"

which they may do either in earnest or in jest; and, in the opinion of *Sempronius* in the Play, it is best done in jest. *Warburton.*

Ver. 34. *If secret gold* sap *on from knave to knave.*] The expression is fine, and gives us the image of a place invested; where the approaches are made by communications, which support one another: just as the connexions amongst knaves, after they have been

Once, we confess, beneath the patriot's cloak,
From the crack'd bag the dropping guinea spoke,
And gingling down the back-stairs, told the crew,
"Old Cato is as great a rogue as you."
Blest paper-credit! last and best supply!
That lends Corruption lighter wings to fly!
Gold imp'd by thee, can compass hardest things,
Can pocket States, can fetch or carry Kings;
A single leaf shall waft an army o'er,
Or ship off senates to a distant shore;

NOTES.

been taken in by a state-engineer, serve to screen and encourage each other's private corruptions. *Warburton.*

Ver. 35. *beneath the patriot's cloak,*] This is a true story, which happened in the reign of William III. to an unsuspected old patriot, who coming out at the back-door from having been closeted by the King, where he had received a large bag of Guineas, the bursting of the bag discovered his business there. *Pope.*

"Sir Christopher Musgrave, the wisest man of the party (the Tories), died before the last Session; and, by their conduct after his death, it appeared that they wanted his direction. He had been at the head of the opposition that was made in the last reign, from the beginning to the end; but he gave up many points of great importance in the critical minute; for which I have good reason to believe that he had twelve thousand pounds from the late King, at different times."—*Burnet, under the year* 1705. *Warburton.*

Ver. 42. *fetch or carry Kings;*] In our author's time, many Princes had been sent about the world, and great changes of Kings projected in Europe. The partition treaty had disposed of Spain; France had set up a King for England, who was sent to Scotland, and back again; King Stanislaus was sent to Poland, and back again; the Duke of Anjou was sent to Spain, and Don Carlos to Italy. *Pope.*

Ver. 44. *Or ship off senates to a distant shore;*] Alludes to several Ministers, Counsellors, and Patriots banished in our times

to

A leaf, like Sibyl's, scatter to and fro
Our fates and fortunes, as the winds shall blow:
Pregnant with thousands flits the scrap unseen,
And silent sells a King, or buys a Queen.
  Oh! that such bulky bribes as all might see,
Still, as of old, encumber'd villany!
Could France or Rome divert our brave designs,
With all their brandies or with all their wines?
What could they more than knights and squires confound,
Or water all the Quorum ten miles round?
A statesman's slumbers how this speech would spoil!
" Sir, Spain has sent a thousand jars of oil;
Huge bales of British cloth blockade the door;
A hundred oxen at your levee roar."
  Poor Avarice one torment more would find;
Nor could Profusion squander all in kind.
Astride his cheese Sir Morgan might we meet;
And Worldly crying coals from street to street,

NOTES.

to Siberia, and to that MORE GLORIOUS FATE of the PARLIAMENT of PARIS, banished to Pontoise in the year 1720. *Pope.*

Ver. 47. *Pregnant with thousands*] The imagery is very sublime, and alludes to the course of a destroying pestilence. The Psalmist in his expression of " the pestilence that walketh in darkness," supplied him with the grandeur of his idea. *Warburton.*

Ver. 62.] Some Misers of great wealth, proprietors of the coal-mines, had entered at this time into an association to keep up coals

VARIATIONS.

After Ver. 50. in the MS.

To break a trust were Peter brib'd with wine,
Peter! 'twould pose as wise a head as thine. *Warburton.*

Whom with a wig so wild, and mien so maz'd,
Pity mistakes for some poor tradesman craz'd.
Had Colepepper's whole wealth been hops and hogs,
Could he himself have sent it to the dogs?
His Grace will game: to White's a bull be led,
With spurning heels and with a butting head;
To White's be carried, as to ancient games,
Fair coursers, vases, and alluring dames.
Shall then Uxorio, if the stakes he sweep,
Bear home six whores, and make his Lady weep?
Or soft Adonis, so perfum'd and fine,
Drive to St. James's a whole herd of swine?
Oh filthy check on all industrious skill,
To spoil the nation's last great trade, Quadrille!

NOTES.

coals to an extravagant price, whereby the poor were reduced almost to starve; till one of them, taking the advantage of underselling the rest, defeated the design. One of these Misers was *worth ten thousand*, another *seven thousand* a year. *Pope.*

Ver. 65. *Colepepper's*] Sir WILLIAM COLEPEPPER, Bart., a person of an ancient family and ample fortune, without one other quality of a Gentleman, who, after ruining himself at the Gaming-table, passed the rest of his days in sitting there to see the ruin of others; preferring to subsist upon borrowing and begging, rather than to enter into any reputable method of life, and refusing a post in the army, which was offered him. *Pope.*

VARIATIONS.

Ver. 65. *Had Colepepper's*] Thus in former editions:
Had Hawley's fortune lain in hops and hogs,
Scarce Hawley's self had sent it to the dogs. *Warton.*

Ver. 77. *Since then, &c.*] In the former editions:
Well, then, since with the world we stand or fall,
Come take it as we find it, gold and all. *Warburton.*

Since, then, my Lord, on such a world we fall,
What say you? B. Say? Why, take it, gold and all.
P. What Riches give us let us then inquire:
Meat, fire, and clothes. B. What more? P. Meat, clothes, and fire. 80

COMMENTARY.

Ver. 77. *Since, then, my Lord, on such a world, &c.*] Having thus ironically described the incumbrance which the want of money would occasion to all criminal excesses by the abuse of Riches, particularly to *Gaming*, which being now become of public concern, he affects much regard to:

" Oh filthy check on all industrious skill,
To spoil the nation's last great trade, Quadrille!"

he dismisses the *previous question* without deciding on it, in the same *ironical* manner:

" Since, then, my Lord, on such a world we fall,
What say you? Say? Why, take it, gold and all."

That is, since for these great purposes we must have *money*, let us now *seriously* inquire into its *true use*.

Ver. 79. *What Riches give us, &c.*] He examines therefore in the *first* place (from ver. 78 to 97.), I. *Of what use Riches are to ourselves:*

" What Riches give us let us then inquire:
Meat, fire, and clothes. What more? Meat, clothes, and fire."

The *mere* turn of the expression, without further reasoning, shews that all the infinite ways of spending *on ourselves*, contrived in the *insolence of wealth*, by those who would *more than live*, are only these three things diversified throughout every wearied mode of luxury and wantonness.

Yet as little as this is (adds the Poet from ver. 81 to 85.) it is only to be had by the *moderate use* of riches; *Avarice* and *Profusion* not allowing the possessors of the most exorbitant wealth even this little:

" Alas! 'tis more than *Turner* finds they give.
Alas! 'tis more than (all his visions past)
Unhappy *Wharton*, waking, found at last!"

But

Is this too little? would you more than live?
Alas! 'tis more than Turner finds they give.
Alas! 'tis more than (all his visions past)
Unhappy Wharton, waking, found at last!

COMMENTARY.

But what is it you would expect them to give? continues the Poet (from ver. 84 to 91.). Would you have them capable of restoring those real blessings, which men have lost by their vices or their villanies; or of satisfying those imaginary ones, which they have gotten by their irregular passions? Though they were, with what face could Japhet demand his forfeit nose and ears? or in what language could Narses ask for the gratification of appetites which Nature never gave?

But now admit, pursues our author (from ver. 90 to 97.), that wealth might, in some cases, alleviate the unmerited miseries of life, by procuring medicines both for the mind and body; it is not to be thought that it should operate like a charm, while only worn about one. Yet this, these *poor men of pelf* expect from it; while *Avarice* on the one hand, withholds them from giving at all, even to the Doctor in extremity; or *Vanity* diverts the donation from a friend in life, to the endowment of a *cat* or *college* at their death. It is true, *Riches* might bestow the greatest of all blessings, a *virtuous consciousness* of our having employed them as becomes the *substitutes of Providence,*

"To ease or emulate the care of Heaven." Ver. 230.

in acts of BENEFICENCE and CHARITY; and this use is next to be considered.

NOTES.

Ver. 82. *Turner*] One who, being possessed of three hundred thousand pounds, laid down his coach, because interest was reduced from five to four *per cent.* and then put seventy thousand into the Charitable Corporation for better interest; which sum having lost, he took it so much to heart, that he kept his chamber ever after. It is thought he would not have outlived it, but that he was heir to another considerable estate, which he daily expected, and that by this course of life he saved both clothes and all other expenses. *Pope.*

What can they give? to dying Hopkins, heirs?
To Chartres, vigour? Japhet, nose and ears?
Can they, in gems bid pallid Hippia glow,
In Fulvia's buckle ease the throbs below:
Or heal, old Narses, thy obscener ail,
With all th' embroidery plaster'd at thy tail?
They might (were Harpax not too wise to spend)
Give Harpax' self the blessing of a friend;
Or find some Doctor that would save the life
Of wretched Shylock, spite of Shylock's wife:
But thousands die, without or this or that,
Die, and endow a college or a cat.

NOTES.

Ver. 84. *Unhappy Wharton,*] A Nobleman of great qualities, but as unfortunate in the application of them, as if they had been vices and follies. See his Character in the first Epistle. *Pope.*

Ver. 85. *Hopkins,*] A citizen, whose rapacity obtained him the name of *Vulture Hopkins.* He lived worthless, but died *worth three hundred thousand pounds,* which he would give to no person living, but left it so as not to be inherited till after the second generation. His counsel representing to him how many years it must be before this could take effect, and that his money could only lie at interest all that time, he expressed great joy thereat, and said, "They would then be as long in spending, as he had been in getting it." But the Chancery afterwards set aside the will, and gave it to the heir at law. *Pope.*

Ver. 86. *Japhet, nose and ears?*] JAPHET CROOK, alias Sir *Peter Stranger,* was punished with the loss of those parts, for having forged a conveyance of an estate to himself, upon which he took up several thousand pounds. He was at the same time sued in Chancery for having fraudulently obtained a will, by which he possessed another considerable estate, in wrong of the brother of the deceased. By these means he was *worth* a great sum, which (in reward for the small loss of his ears) he enjoyed in prison till his death, and quietly left to his executor. *Pope.*

Ver. 96. *Die, and endow a college or a cat.*] A famous Duchess

To some, indeed, Heaven grants the happier fate,
T' enrich a bastard, or a son they hate.
Perhaps you think the poor might have their part?
Bond damns the poor, and hates them from his heart:

COMMENTARY.

Ver. 97. *To some, indeed, &c.*] For now the Poet comes, in the second place, to examine, II. *Of what use Riches are to others;* which he teaches, as is his way throughout this Poem, by the *abuse* that stands opposed to it. Thus he shews (from ver. 96 to 107.), that with regard to acts of *beneficence*, the utmost Heaven will grant to those who so greatly abuse its blessings, is either to enrich some favourite *bastard*, and so perpetuate their vice and infamy; or else, contrary to their intent, a legitimate *son they hated*, and so expose to public scorn and ridicule, the defeat of their unnatural cruelty. But with regard to acts of charity, they are given up to so reprobate a sense, as to believe they are then seconding the designs of Heaven, when they pursue the indigent with imprecations, or leave them in the midst of their distresses unrelieved, as the common enemies of God and Man.

NOTES.

Duchess of *R.* in her last will left considerable legacies and annuities to her cats. *Pope.*

This benefactress was no other than La Belle Stuart of the Comte de Grammont; and her endowment was not a proper object of satire. The real truth was, that she left annuities to certain female friends, with the burden of maintaining some of her cats; a delicate way of providing for poor, and, probably, proud gentlewomen, without making them feel that they owed their livelihood to her mere liberality. *Warton.*

Ver. 100. *Bond damns the poor, &c.*] This Epistle was written in the year 1730, when a corporation was established to lend money to the poor upon pledges, by the name of the *Charitable Corporation;* but the whole was turned only to an iniquitous method of enriching particular people, to the ruin of such numbers, that it became a parliamentary concern to endeavour the relief of those unhappy sufferers; and three of the managers, who were members

The grave Sir Gilbert holds it for a rule
That every man in want is knave or fool:
"God cannot love (says Blunt, with tearless eyes)
The wretch he starves"—and piously denies:
But the good Bishop, with a meeker air,
Admits, and leaves them, Providence's care.

NOTES.

members of the House, were expelled. By the report of the Committee appointed to inquire into that iniquitous affair, it appears, that when it was objected to the intended removal of the office, that the poor, for whose use it was erected, would be hurt by it, Bond, one of the Directors, replied, *Damn the poor.* That "God hates the poor," and, "That every man in want is either knave or fool," &c. were the genuine apothegms of some of the persons here mentioned. *Pope.*

Ver. 102. *That every man in want is knave or fool:*] None are more subject to be deluded by this vain mistake, that *prudence does all in human affairs,* than those who have been most befriended by fortune. The reason is, that in this situation prudence has never been brought to the test, nor vanity ever mortified. So that prudence will be always ready to take to herself what fortune encourages vanity to call her due. And then want of success will, of course, be imputed to want of wit. *Warburton.*

Ver. 105. *But the good Bishop, &c.*] In the place of this imaginary *Bishop,* and in the first Dialogue of 1738, the Poet had named a very worthy person of condition, who, for a course of many years, had shined in public stations much to the honour and advantage of his country. But being at once oppressed by popular prejudice and a public censure, it was no wonder the Poet, to whom he was personally a stranger, should think hardly of him. I had the honour to be well known to that truly illustrious person, and to be greatly obliged by him. From my intimate knowledge of his character, I was fully persuaded of his innocence, and that he was unwarily drawn in by a pack of infamous cheats, to his great loss of fortune as well as reputation. At my request and information, therefore, the poet with much satisfaction retracted, and struck out, in both places, his ill-founded censure. I have since had the pleasure to understand, from the best authority,

Yet, to be just to these poor men of pelf,
Each does but hate his neighbour as himself:

COMMENTARY.

Ver. 107. *Yet, to be just, &c.*] Having thus shewn the *true use* of Riches in a description of the *abuse;* and how that use is perpetually defeated by *profusion* and *avarice;* it was natural to inquire into the spring and original of these vices; as the mischiefs they occasion must be well understood, before they can be corrected. The disposition of his matter, therefore, now calls upon him to come to the *Philosophy* of his subject; and he examines particularly into the *Motives of Avarice.* But what is observable, he, all along, satirically intermixes with the *real motives,* several *imaginary;* and those as wild as imagination could conceive. This, which at first sight might seem to vitiate the purpose of his philosophical inquiry, is found, when duly considered, to have the highest art of design. His business, the reader sees, was to prove that the real motives had the utmost extravagancy. Nothing could more conduce to this end, than the setting them by, and comparing them with, the most whimsical the fancy itself could invent; in which situation it was seen, that the real were full as wild

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that these favourable sentiments of him have of late been fully justified in the course of some proceedings in the High Court of Chancery, the most unerring investigator of truth and falsehood. *Warburton.*

This proceeding certainly does great honour to Dr. Warburton's gratitude and friendship. Sir R. gave him the living of Brandbroughton; and the letter he wrote in his vindication appears in p. 144. of his Life by Bishop Hurd. *Warton.*

The person above referred to is Sir Robert Sutton, whom Pope had alluded to in the folio edition of 1735, thus:

" But reverend S * * n with a softer air,
Admits and leaves them Providence's care."

The other passage mentioned by Warburton, in the first Dialogue of 1738, appears thus in Dodsley's edition of 1739:

" In Sappho touch the failings of the sex;
In reverend S * * n note some small neglects."

which last line now appears:

" In reverend Bishops note some small neglects."

Damn'd to the mines, an equal fate betides
The slave that digs it, and the slave that hides.
B. Who suffer thus, mere Charity should own,
Must act on motives powerful, tho' unknown.
P. Some war, some plague, or famine they foresee,
Some revelation hid from you and me.
Why Shylock wants a meal, the cause is found;
He thinks a loaf will rise to fifty pound.

COMMENTARY.

wild as the fictitious. To give these images all the force they are capable of, he first describes (from ver. 118 to 123.) the real motive, and an imaginary one different from the real, in the *same person;* and then (from ver. 122 to 133.) an imaginary one, and a real the very same with the imaginary, in *different persons.* This address the Poet himself hints at, ver. 155.

" Less mad the wildest whimsey we can frame," &c.

Let me observe, that this has still a further beauty, arising from the nature of the poem, which (as we have shewn) is partly satirical, and partly philosophical. With regard to the particular beauties of this disposition, I shall only take notice of one; where the Poet introduces the fictitious motive of Blunt's avarice, by a wizard's prophecy:

" At length corruption, like a general flood,
(So long by watchful Ministers withstood)
Shall deluge all; and *avarice* creeping on,
Spread like a low-born mist, and blot the sun," &c.
" See Britain sunk in lucre's sordid charms,
And France reveng'd on Anne's and Edward's arms!"

For it was the Poet's purpose to shew, that the main and principal *abuse* of Riches arises from AVARICE.

NOTES.

Ver. 109. *Damn'd to the mines,*] This is plainly taken from the Causes of the Decay of Christian Piety. " It has always been held," says this excellent writer, " the severest treatment of slaves and malefactors, *damnare ad metalla*, to force them to dig in the mines: now this is the covetous man's lot, from which he is never to expect a release." *Warton.*

What made Directors cheat in South-sea year?
To live on venison when it sold so dear.
Ask you why Phryne the whole auction buys?
Phryne foresees a general excise.
Why she and Sappho raise that monstrous sum?
Alas! they fear a man will cost a plum.
Wise Peter sees the world's respect for gold,
And therefore hopes this nation may be sold:

NOTES.

Ver. 118. *To live on venison*] In the extravance and luxury of the South-sea year, the price of a haunch of venison was from three to five pounds. *Pope.*

Ver. 120. *general excise.*] Many people, about the year 1733, had a conceit that such a thing was intended, of which it is not improbable this lady might have some intimation. *Pope.*

Ver. 123. *Wise Peter*] PETER WALTER, a person not only eminent in the wisdom of his profession, as a dexterous attorney, but allowed to be a good, if not a safe, conveyancer; extremely respected by the nobility of this land, though free from all manner of luxury and ostentation. His wealth was never seen, and his bounty never heard of, except to his own son, for whom he procured an employment of considerable profit, of which he gave him as much as was *necessary*. Therefore the taxing this gentleman with any ambition, is certainly a great wrong to him. *Pope.*

Peter Walter purchased Stalbridge Park, near Sherborne, a seat of the Boyle Family, now in possession of the Earl of Uxbridge, where he lived many years. He was a neighbour of Henry Fielding, who lived at East Stour, about four miles distant, and was supposed to be the character described by him in Tom Jones, the important "Peter Pounce."

"The manor of Stalbridge was purchased by Peter Walter, Esq., who was Clerk of the Peace for the county of Middlesex, steward to the Duke of Newcastle, and other Noblemen and Gentlemen. He acquired an immense fortune, *represented the borough of Bridport in Parliament, and died* 1745, *æt.* 83."

History of Dorset.

He resided, during the latter period of his life, in a spacious mansion within this manor, where some particulars of him are still remembered.

Glorious ambition! Peter, swell thy store,
And be what Rome's great Didius was before.
The crown of Poland, venal twice an age,
To just three millions stinted modest Gage.

NOTES.

remembered. He had been assisted in making a favourite purchase by a dependant, who consequently expected a compensation: Mr. W. refused making any at his *own expense*, but promised to reward him at the expense of *some other person*. He accordingly prevailed on a neighbouring Baronet, to lease to him a part of his demesne lands on terms so unusually advantageous, that they could not escape observation; the *taxes* and *parochial imposts* being charged on the occupier of the *adjoining farm*. The estate is still possessed by a daughter of the lessee, with all the advantages attached to it. A characteristic scene was described by a son of his bailiff, who, when a boy, attended his father in an evening on business at the manor-house. They found its possessor sitting without light in a small room communicating with the kitchen. On their approach he applied a dry raspberry stick to his fire, and lighted a small candle which stood on the table before him; but finding, on inquiry, that the present business required no light, he extinguished the candle, and continued the conversation in the dark. Notwithstanding his rigid parsimony, he exacted the respect usually paid to opulence; for observing that the youth had continued with his hat on, supposing no extraordinary deference due to the great man's appearance, he rated him violently for his rusticity and inattention.

The story of the "Miser and the Candle," is not uncommon; but I have this account from undoubted authority. The other anecdote shews the propriety of Pope's epithet, "Wise Peter."

Bowles.

Ver. 126. *Rome's great Didius*] A Roman lawyer so rich, as to purchase the Empire when it was set to sale upon the death of Pertinax. *Pope.*

Ver. 127. *The crown of Poland, &c.*] The two persons here mentioned were of quality, each of whom in the Mississippi despised to realize above *three hundred thousand pounds;* the Gentleman with a view to the purchase of the crown of Poland, the Lady on a vision of the like royal nature. They since retired into Spain,

But nobler scenes Maria's dreams unfold,
Hereditary realms, and worlds of gold. 130
Congenial souls! whose life one avarice joins,
And one fate buries in th' Asturian mines.

NOTES.

Spain, where they are still in search of gold in the mines of the Asturias. *Pope.*

A country devoted to ruin by its ambitious and unjust neighbours; who deserve the severest strokes of such a satirist as our author. *Warton.*

Ver. 128. *stinted modest Gage.*] "The names of these two persons were Mr. Gage, and Lady Mary Herbert, daughter of William, Marquis of Powis, who, dying in October 1745, left in the hands of his executors and trustees an annuity of 200*l.* a-year to be paid to the use of this daughter, not for the payment of her many debts which she had contracted, but to keep her from wanting necessaries. William, Marquis of Powis, son of the former, litigated the said will, but died while the suit was pending in the Ecclesiastical Court, leaving the residue of the lands and profits of his estates, after his debts should be paid, in the hands of trustees for the use of the Right Honourable Henry Arthur, then Lord Herbert, afterwards Earl of Powis, with whom he had no relation, friendship, or acquaintance; which Arthur afterwards married Barbara Herbert, niece and heir at law of the latter Earl Powis. This man, by fair promises and threats, got the trustees of the first Earl to agree in obtaining administration with the will and codicil of the Marquis the father annexed, in May 1749, and then repented paying the annuity of 200*l.* to Mary Herbert, daughter of the said Marquis. As she now resided in France, she had obtained a promise there of being made Dame of Honour to the Queen of France; which Lord Herbert hearing of, went out of England to dissuade her from accepting it, as being a disgrace to her and the family; and promised he would pay her all the arrears of the annuity of 200*l.* due by her father's will, and would give her, over and above, 200*l.* a-year more. This he never performed, till after several suits of law the cause was brought to the House of Lords, who decreed both her annuities to be paid, with all arrears due in the year 1766. Throughout a long life, so little difference has this lady found between dreams and realities."

From MSS. Notes of Mr. Bowyer. *Warton.*

Much injur'd Blunt! why bears he Britain's hate?
A wizard told him in these words our fate:
" At length corruption, like a general flood,
(So long by watchful Ministers withstood,)
Shall deluge all; and avarice creeping on,
Spread like a low-born mist, and blot the sun;
Statesman and patriot ply alike the stocks,
Peeress and butler share alike the box,
And judges job, and bishops bite the town,
And mighty dukes pack cards for half a crown.
See Britain sunk in lucre's sordid charms,
And France reveng'd on ANNE'S and EDWARD'S arms!"

NOTES.

Ver. 133. *Much injur'd Blunt!*] Sir JOHN BLUNT, originally a scrivener, was one of the first projectors of the South Sea Company, and afterwards one of the directors and chief managers of the famous scheme in 1720. He was also one of those who suffered most severely by the bill of pains and penalties on the said directors. He was a Dissenter of a most religious deportment, and professed to be a great believer. Whether he did really credit the prophecy here mentioned is not certain, but it was constantly in this very style he declaimed against the corruption and luxury of the age, the partiality of Parliaments, and the misery of party-spirit. He was particularly eloquent against *avarice* in great and noble persons, of which he had indeed lived to see many miserable examples. He died in the year 1732. *Pope.*

Ver. 137. ——*avarice* creeping *on,*
Spread like a low-born *mist, and blot the* sun;]
The similitude is extremely apposite, implying that this vice is of base and mean original; hatched and nursed up among scriveners and stock-jobbers, and unknown, till of late, to the Nobles of this land: but now, in the fulness of time, she rears her head, and aspires to cover the most illustrious stations in her dark and pestilential shade. The Sun, and other luminaries of Heaven, signifying, in the high eastern style, the Grandees and Nobles of the earth. SCRIBL. *Warburton.*

'Twas no Court-badge, great Scrivener! fir'd thy brain,
Nor lordly luxury, nor city gain:
No, 'twas thy righteous end, asham'd to see
Senates degenerate, patriots disagree,
And nobly wishing party rage to cease,
To buy both sides, and give thy country peace.
" All this is madness," cries a sober sage:
But who, my friend, has reason in his rage?

COMMENTARY.

Ver. 151. " *All this is madness,*" *&c.*] But now the *Sage,* who has confined himself to *books,* which prescribe the *government of the passions;* and never looked out upon the world, where he might see them let loose, and, like Milton's devils, riding the air in whirlwind, cries out, *All this is madness.* True, replies the Poet (from ver. 151 to 177.), but this madness is a common one; and only to be prevented by a severe attention to the rule laid down in the *Essay:*

" Reason still use, to Reason still attend;" Ep. ii. ver. 68.

for amongst the generality of men, and without the greatest circumspection,

" The *ruling Passion,* be it what it will,
The *ruling Passion conquers Reason still.*"

But then (continues he), as senseless as this passion appears, by the sway of its overbearing bias, it would be still more senseless had it no bias at all: you have seen us here intermix with the *real,* the most *fantastical* and extravagant that imagination could invent; yet even these are less extravagant than a *ruling Passion without a constant aim.* Would you know the reason? then listen to this important truth: " 'Tis HEAVEN itself that gives the *ruling Passion,* and thereby directs different men to different ends: but these being exerted through the ministry of NATURE (of whom the great Philosopher truly observes, *modum tenere nescia est,* Aug. Scient. l. ii. c. 13.), they are very apt to run into extremes: to correct which, Heaven, at the same time, added the moderatrix *Reason;* not to take the *ruling Passion* out of the hands and ministry of *Nature,* but to restrain and rectify its irregular impulses (see *Essay,* Ep. ii. ver. 151, *et seq.*); and what extremes, after this, remained uncorrected in the administration of this *weak Queen* (ver. 140. Ep. ii.), the

" The Ruling Passion, be it what it will,
The Ruling Passion conquers Reason still."
Less mad the wildest whimsey we can frame,
Than even that passion, if it has no aim;
For tho' such motives folly you may call,
The folly's greater to have none at all.
Hear then the truth: " 'Tis Heaven each passion sends,
And different men directs to different ends.
Extremes in Nature equal good produce;
Extremes in Man concur to general use."
Ask me what makes one keep, and one bestow?
That power who bids the ocean ebb and flow,
Bids seed-time, harvest, equal course maintain,
Thro' reconcil'd extremes of drought and rain,

COMMENTARY.

the Divine Artist himself has, in his heavenly skill and bounty, set to rights; by so ordering, that these of the *moral* world, like those of the *natural*, should, even by the very means of their contrariety and diversity, concur to defeat the malignity of one another:

" Extremes in *Nature* equal good produce;
Extremes in *Man* concur to general use."

For as the various seasons of the year are supported and sustained by the reconciled extremes of *wet* and *dry*, *cold* and *heat*; so all the *orders* and *degrees* of civil life are kept up by *avarice* and *profusion*, *selfishness* and *vanity*. The Miser being but the steward of the Prodigal; and only so much the more backward as the other is precipitate:

" This year a reservoir, to keep and spare;
The next, a fountain, spouting thro' his heir."

NOTES.

Ver. 154. *conquers Reason still.*"] See what is said before of the pernicious tenet of a Ruling Passion. *Warton.*

And see also the Preliminary Note on the first of these Moral Epistles.

Ver. 158. *The folly's greater*] Verbatim from Rochefoucault. *Warton.*

Builds life on death, on change duration founds,
And gives th' eternal wheels to know their rounds.
Riches, like insects, when conceal'd they lie,
Wait but for wings, and in their season fly.
Who sees pale Mammon pine amidst his store,
Sees but a backward steward for the poor;
This year a reservoir, to keep and spare;
The next, a fountain, spouting thro' his heir,
In lavish streams to quench a country's thirst,
And men and dogs shall drink him till they burst.
Old Cotta sham'd his fortune and his birth,
Yet was not Cotta void of wit or worth:

COMMENTARY.

Ver. 177. *Old Cotta sham'd his fortune, &c.*] The Poet now proceeds to support the principles of his Philosophy by *examples;* but before we come to these, it will be necessary to look back upon the general economy of the Poem.

In the first part, to ver. 109, the *use* and *abuse* of Riches are *satirically* delivered in *precept.* From thence to ver. 177, the causes of the abuse are *philosophically* inquired into: and from thence to the end, the *use* and *abuse* are *historically* illustrated by *examples.* Where we may observe, that the conclusion of the *first* part, concerning the Miser's cruelty to others, naturally introduceth the *second,* by a satirical apology, which shews that he is full as cruel to himself. The explanation of this extraordinary phænomenon brings the author into the *Philosophy* of his subject; and this ending in an observation of *avarice* and *profusion*'s correcting and reconciling one another, as naturally introduces the *third,* which proves the truth of the observation from *fact.* And thus the *Philosophy* of his subject standing between his *Precepts* and *Examples,* gives strength and light to both, and receives it reflected back again from both.

He

NOTES.

Ver. 173. *This year a reservoir,*] The same comparison was before used by Young, Sat. vi. line 34. Pope collected gold from many a dunghill; for this allusion is taken from Fuller's Church History, p. 28. *Warton.*

What tho' (the use of barbarous spits forgot)
His kitchen vied in coolness with his grot?
His court with nettles, moats with cresses stor'd,
With soups unbought and salads bless'd his board?
If Cotta liv'd on pulse, it was no more
Than bramins, saints, and sages did before.
To cram the rich was prodigal expense,
And who would take the poor from Providence?
Like some lone Chartreux stands the good old hall,
Silence without, and fasts within the wall;
No rafter'd roofs with dance and tabor sound,
No noon-tide bell invites the country round:
Tenants with sighs the smokeless towers survey,
And turn th' unwilling steeds another way:
Benighted wanderers, the forest o'er,
Curse the sav'd candle, and unopening door;
While the gaunt mastiff, growling at the gate,
Affrights the beggar whom he longs to eat.

COMMENTARY.

He first gives us two examples (from ver. 176 to 219.) of these opposite *ruling Passions*, and (to see them in their full force) taken from subjects, as he tells us, *not void of wit or worth;* from such as could reason themselves (as we see by ver. 183, *et seq.* and ver. 205, *et seq.*) into the whole length of each extreme: for the Poet had observed of the *ruling Passion*, that

"Wit, spirit, faculties, but make it worse;
Reason itself but gives it edge and power."

Essay, Ep. ii. ver. 146.

Old *Cotta* and his *Son* therefore afforded him the most happy illustration of his doctrine.

IMITATIONS.

Ver. 182. *With soups unbought*]

"— dapibus mensas onerabat inemptis." VIRG. *Pope.*

Not so his son, he mark'd this oversight,
And then mistook reverse of wrong for right.
For what to shun will no great knowledge need,
But what to follow, is a task indeed.
Yet sure, of qualities deserving praise,
More go to ruin fortunes, than to raise.
What slaughter'd hecatombs, what floods of wine,
Fill the capacious 'squire, and deep divine!
Yet no mean motive this profusion draws,
His oxen perish in his country's cause;
'Tis GEORGE and LIBERTY that crowns the cup,
And zeal for that great House which eats him up.
The woods recede around the naked seat,
The sylvans groan—no matter—for the fleet:
Next goes his wool—to clothe our valiant bands;
Last, for his country's love, he sells his lands.

NOTES.

Ver. 199. *For what to shun will no great knowledge need,*
But what to follow, is a task indeed.]

The Poet is here speaking only of the knowledge gained by *experience.* Now there are so many miserable examples of ill conduct, that no one, with his eyes open, can be at a loss to know *what to shun;* but, very inviting examples of a good conduct are extremely rare. Besides, the mischiefs of folly are eminent and obvious; but the fruits of prudence, remote and retired from common observation; and, if seen at all, yet their dependence on their *causes* not being direct and immediate, they are not easily understood. *Warburton.*

Ver. 200.] Here I found two lines in the Poet's MS.

" Yet sure, of qualities deserving praise,
More go to ruin fortunes, than to raise;"

which, as they seemed to be necessary to do justice to the imaginary character going to be described, I advised him to insert in their place. *Warburton.*

The expression of "more qualities go," is surely faulty. *Warton.*

To town he comes, completes the nation's hope,
And heads the bold train-bands, and burns a Pope.
And shall not Britain now regard his toils,
Britain, that pays her patriots with her spoils?
In vain at Court the bankrupt pleads his cause;
His thankless country leaves him to her laws.

The sense to value Riches, with the art
T' enjoy them, and the virtue to impart,

COMMENTARY.

Ver. 219. *The sense to value Riches, &c.*] The author having now largely exposed the ABUSE of Riches by *example;* not only the *Plan*, but the *Philosophy* of his Poem, required that he should, in the same way, shew the USE likewise: he, therefore, (from ver. 218 to 249,) calls for an example, in which may be found, against the PRODIGAL, the *sense to value Riches;* against the VAIN, the *art to enjoy them;* and against the AVARICIOUS, the *virtue to impart them*, when acquired. This whole Art (he tells us) may be comprised in one great and general precept, which is this: "That the rich man should consider himself as the substitute of Providence, in this unequal distribution of things; as the person who is

"*To ease; or emulate, the care of Heaven.*"

"To *mend* the faults of Fortune, or to *justify* her graces." And thus the Poet slides naturally into the prosecution of his subject, in an example of the true use of Riches.

NOTES.

Ver. 218.] It is to be regretted, that the political feelings of Pope have in this instance been indulged so far as to induce him to injure his argument for the sake of a sarcasm on the House of Hanover. What he had undertaken to demonstrate was, that the injurious

VARIATIONS.

After ver. 218, in the MS.

Where one lean herring furnish'd Cotta's board,
And nettles grew, fit porridge for their Lord;
Where mad good-nature, bounty misapplied,
In lavish Curio blaz'd awhile and died;
There Providence once more shall shift the scene,
And shewing H—Y, teach the golden mean. *Warburton.*

Not meanly, nor ambitiously pursued,
Not sunk by sloth, nor rais'd by servitude;
To balance fortune by a just expense,
Join with economy, magnificence;
With splendor, charity; with plenty, health;
Oh teach us, BATHURST! yet unspoil'd by wealth!
That secret rare, between th' extremes to move
Of mad good-nature, and of mean self-love.
B. To worth or want well weigh'd, be bounty given,
And ease, or emulate, the care of heaven;

NOTES.

injurious effects of the father's avarice were obviated by the conduct of the son, who disperses his immense wealth in the service of his country; but, from the irony that runs through the whole passage we are led to conclude that he could scarcely have devoted it to a worse purpose, and that it did as much harm in its overflow as it did in its restraint; a result which can scarcely be said to shew that

"Extremes in man concur to general use."

Ver. 219, 220. *The sense to value Riches, with the art*
T' enjoy them, and the virtue to impart,]

The sense to value Riches, is not in the city-meaning, *the sense in valuing them:* for, as *Riches* may be *enjoyed* without *art*, and *imparted* without *virtue*, so they may be *valued* without *sense*. That man, therefore, only shews he has the *sense to value Riches* who keeps what he has acquired, in order to enjoy one part innocently and elegantly, in such measure and degree as his station may justify, (which the Poet calls the *art of enjoying*) and to impart the remainder amongst objects of *worth*, or *want well weighed*, which is, indeed, the *virtue of imparting*. *Warburton.*

VARIATIONS.

After Ver. 226. in the MS.

That secret rare, with affluence hardly join'd,
Which W——n lost, yet B—y ne'er could find;
Still miss'd by vice, and scarce by virtue hit,
By G——'s goodness, or by S—'s wit. *Warburton.*

Whose measure full o'erflows on human race,
Mend Fortune's fault, and justify her grace.
Wealth in the gross is death, but life diffus'd;
As poison heals, in just proportion us'd:
In heaps, like ambergrise, a stink it lies,
But well dispers'd, is incense to the skies.
P. Who starves by Nobles, or with Nobles eats?
The wretch that trusts them, and the rogue that cheats.
Is there a Lord, who knows a cheerful noon
Without a fiddler, flatterer, or buffoon?
Whose table, wit, or modest merit share,
Unelbow'd by a gamester, pimp, or play'r?
Who copies yours, or OXFORD'S better part,
To ease th' oppress'd, and raise the sinking heart?
Where'er he shines, oh Fortune, gild the scene,
And angels guard him in the golden mean!
There, English bounty yet awhile may stand,
And honour linger ere it leaves the land.

NOTES.

Ver. 231, 232. *Whose measure full o'erflows on human race, Mend Fortune's fault, and justify her grace.*] i. e. Such of the Rich, whose full measure overflows on human race, repair the wrongs of Fortune done to the indigent, and at the same time justify the favours she had bestowed upon themselves. *Warburton.*

Ver. 243. OXFORD'S *better part,*] Edward Harley, Earl of Oxford; the son of Robert, created Earl of Oxford and Earl of Mortimer by Queen Anne. This Nobleman died regretted by all men of letters, great numbers of whom had experienced his benefits. He left behind him one of the most noble Libraries in Europe. *Pope.*

But all our praises why should Lords engross?
Rise, honest Muse! and sing the MAN OF ROSS: 250

COMMENTARY.

Ver. 249. *But all our praises why should Lords engross?*
Rise, honest Muse!]

This invidious expression of unwillingness that the Nobility should engross all the praise, is strongly ironical; their example having been hitherto given only to shew the *abuse* of Riches. But there is great justness of design, as well as agreeableness of manner, in the preference here given to the *Man of Ross*. The purpose of the Poet is to shew, that an immense fortune is not wanted for all the good that Riches are capable of doing. He therefore chuses such an instance, as proves, that a man with five hundred pounds a-year could become a blessing to a whole country; and consequently, that his precepts for the right use of money, are of more general service than a bad heart will give an indifferent head leave to conceive. This was a truth of the greatest importance to inculcate. He therefore (from ver. 249 to 297.) exalts the character of a very private man, one Mr. J. Kyrle, of Herefordshire; and, in ending his description, struck as it were with admiration at a sublimity of *his own creating*, and warmed with sentiments of gratitude which he had raised in himself, in behalf of the public, he breaks out:

"And what? no monument, inscription, stone?
His race, his form, his name almost unknown?"

And then, transported with indignation at a contrary object, he exclaims:

"When Hopkins dies, a thousand lights attend
The wretch, who living sav'd a candle's end:
Should'ring

NOTES.

Ver. 250. *The* MAN OF ROSS:] The person here celebrated, who with a small estate actually performed all these good works, and

VARIATIONS.

After Ver. 250. in the MS.

Trace humble worth beyond Sabrina's shore;
Who sings not him, oh may he sing no more! *Warburton.*

Pleas'd Vaga echoes thro' her winding bounds,
And rapid Severn hoarse applause resounds.
Who hung with woods yon mountain's sultry brow?
From the dry rock who bade the waters flow?

COMMENTARY.

Should'ring God's altar, a vile image stands,
Belies his features, nay, extends his hands."

I take notice of this description of the portentous vanity of a miserable extortioner, chiefly for the use we shall now see he makes of it, in carrying on his subject.

NOTES.

and whose true name was almost lost (partly by the title of the *Man of Ross* given him by way of eminence, and partly by being buried without so much as an inscription), was called Mr. John Kyrle. He died in the year 1724, aged 90, and lies interred in the chancel of the church of Ross in Herefordshire. *Pope.*

We must understand what is here said of *actually performing*, to mean by the contributions which the *Man of Ross*, by his assiduity and interest, collected in his neighbourhood. *Warburton.*

Ver. 250. *Rise, honest Muse!*] These lines, which are eminently beautiful, particularly 267, containing a fine prosopopœia, have conferred immortality on a plain, worthy, and useful citizen of Herefordshire, Mr. John Kyrle, who spent his long life in advancing and contriving plans of public utility. The Howard of his time; who deserves to be celebrated more than all the heroes of Pindar. The particular reason for which I mention them, is to observe the pleasing effect that the use of common and familiar words and objects, judiciously managed, produce in poetry. Such as are here, the words *causeway, seats, spire, market-place, almshouse, apprentic'd.* A fastidious delicacy, and a false refinement, in order to avoid meanness, have deterred our writers from the introduction of such words; but Dryden often hazarded it, and gave by it a secret charm, and a natural air to his verses, well knowing of what consequence it was sometimes to soften and subdue his hints, and not to paint and adorn every object he touched, with perpetual pomp and unremitted splendor. Mr. Kyrle was enabled to effect many of his benevolent purposes by the assistance of liberal subscriptions, which his character easily procured. This circumstance was communicated by Mr. Victor. *Warton.*

Not to the skies in useless columns toss'd,
Or in proud falls magnificently lost,
But clear and artless, pouring thro' the plain
Health to the sick, and solace to the swain.
Whose causeway parts the vale with shady rows?
Whose seats the weary traveller repose?
Who taught that heaven-directed spire to rise?
"The MAN of Ross!" each lisping babe replies.
Behold the market-place with poor o'erspread!
The MAN of Ross divides the weekly bread.
He feeds yon alms-house, neat, but void of state,
Where age and want sit smiling at the gate:
Him portion'd maids, apprentic'd orphans bless'd,
The young who labour, and the old who rest.
Is any sick? the MAN of Ross relieves,
Prescribes, attends, the medicine makes, and gives.
Is there a variance? enter but his door,
Balk'd are the Courts, and contest is no more.
Despairing quacks with curses fled the place,
And vile attorneys, now an useless race.
B. Thrice happy man! enabled to pursue
What all so wish, but want the power to do!
Oh say, what sums that generous hand supply?
What mines, to swell that boundless charity?
P. Of debts and taxes, wife and children clear,
This man possess'd——five hundred pounds a year!
Blush, Grandeur, blush! proud Courts, withdraw your blaze!
Ye little stars! hide your diminish'd rays.

NOTES.

Ver. 281. *Blush, Grandeur, blush! proud Courts, withdraw your blaze,*

B. And what? no monument, inscription, stone?
His race, his form, his name almost unknown?
P. Who builds a church to God, and not to fame,
Will never mark the marble with his name:
Go, search it there, where to be born and die,
Of rich and poor, makes all the history;
Enough, that virtue fill'd the space between;
Prov'd, by the ends of being, to have been.
When Hopkins dies, a thousand lights attend
The wretch, who living sav'd a candle's end:
Should'ring God's altar a vile image stands,
Belies his features, nay, extends his hands;

NOTES.

blaze, &c.] In this sublime apostrophe, *proud Courts* are not bid to *blush* because *outstripp'd* in virtue; for no such contention is supposed: but for being *outshined* in their own proper pretensions to splendor and magnificence. SCRIBL. *Warburton.*

Ver. 284. *his name almost unknown?*] See a further account of the Man of Ross at the end of the present Epistle: p. 365.

Ver. 286. *Will never mark*] As Voltaire did at Ferney, with this inscription: "Deo erexit Voltaire." *Warton.*

Ver. 287. *Go, search it there,*] The Parish-register. *Warburton.*

Ver. 293. *Should'ring God's altar a vile image stands,*
Belies his features, nay, extends his hands;]

The description is inimitable. We see his *shouldering the altar* like one who impiously affected to draw off the reverence of God's worshippers, from the sacred table, upon himself; whose *features* too the sculptor *had belied*, by giving them the traces of humanity: and

VARIATIONS.

Ver. 287.] Thus in the MS.

The Register inrolls him with his poor,
Tells he was born and died, and tells no more.
Just as he ought, he fill'd the space between;
Then stole to rest, unheeded and unseen. *Warburton.*

That live-long wig which Gorgon's self might own,
Eternal buckle takes in Parian stone.
Behold what blessings wealth to life can lend!
And see, what comfort it affords our end.

COMMENTARY.

Ver. 297. *Behold what blessings wealth to life can lend!*
And see, what comfort it affords our end.]

In the first part of this Epistle, the author had shewn, from *Reason*, that Riches abused afford no comfort either in life or death. In this part, where the same truth is taught by *examples*, he had, in the case of Cotta and his son, shewn, that they afford no comfort in *life*: the other member of the division remained to be spoken to:

" Now see what comfort they afford our end."

And this he illustrates (from ver. 298 to 335.) in the unhappy deaths of the last Villiers, Duke of Buckingham, and Sir J. Cutler; whose profusion and avarice he has beautifully contrasted. The miserable end of these two extraordinary persons naturally leads the Poet into this reflection, truly humane, however ludicrously as well as ironically expressed:

" Say, for such worth, are other worlds prepar'd?
Or are they both, in this, their own reward?"

And now, as if fully determined to resolve this doubtful question, he assumes the air and importance of a Professor, ready addressed to plunge himself into the very depths of Theology:

" A knotty point! to which we now proceed—"

when, on a sudden, the whole sense is changed,—

" But you are tir'd—I'll tell a tale.——Agreed."

And thus, by the most easy transition, we are come to the concluding doctrine of his poem.

NOTES.

and what is still more impudent flattery, had insinuated by *extending his hands*, as if that humanity had been, some time or other, put into act. *Warburton.*

Ver. 296. *Eternal buckle takes in Parian stone.*] The Poet ridicules the wretched taste of carving large periwigs on bustos, of which there are several vile examples in the tombs at Westminster, and elsewhere. *Pope.*

In the worst inn's worst room, with mat half-hung,
The floors of plaister, and the walls of dung,
On once a flock-bed, but repair'd with straw,
With tape-tied curtains, never meant to draw,
The George and Garter dangling from that bed
Where tawdry yellow strove with dirty red,
Great Villiers lies—alas! how chang'd from him,
That life of pleasure, and that soul of whim!
Gallant and gay, in Cliveden's proud alcove,
The bower of wanton Shrewsbury and love;

NOTES.

Ver. 305. *Great Villiers lies*—] This Lord, yet more famous for his vices than his misfortunes, having been possessed of about 50,000*l.* a-year, and passed through many of the highest posts in the kingdom, died in the year 1687, in a remote inn in Yorkshire, reduced to the utmost misery. *Pope.*

" When this extraordinary man, with the figure and genius of Alcibiades, could equally charm the presbyterian Fairfax, and the dissolute Charles; when he alike ridiculed that witty king, and his solemn chancellor; when he plotted the ruin of his country with a cabal of bad ministers; or, equally unprincipled, supported its cause with bad patriots; one laments that such parts should have been devoid of every virtue. But when Alcibiades turns chymist; when he is a real bubble, and a visionary miser; when ambition is but a frolic; when the worst designs are for the foolishest ends; contempt extinguishes all reflections on his character. The portrait of this duke has been drawn by four masterly hands: Burnet has hewn it with a rough chisel: Count Hamilton touched it with that slight delicacy that finishes while it seems to sketch: Dryden catched the living likeness: Pope completed the historical resemblance. Yet the abilities of this Lord appear in no instance more amazing, than that being exposed by two of the greatest Poets, he has exposed one of them ten times more severely. Zimri is an admirable portrait; but Bayes an original creation. Dryden satirized Buckingham; but Villiers made Dryden satirize himself." Catalogue of Noble Authors, vol. ii. p. 77. *Warton.*

Or just as gay, at council, in a ring
Of mimic statesmen, and their merry king.
No wit to flatter, left of all his store!
No fool to laugh at, which he valued more.

NOTES.

Ver. 307. *Cliveden*] A delightful palace, on the banks of the Thames, built by the Duke of Buckingham. *Pope.*

Ver. 308. *Shrewsbury*] The Countess of Shrewsbury, a woman abandoned to gallantries. The Earl her husband was killed by the Duke of Buckingham in a duel; and it has been said, that during the combat she held the Duke's horses in the habit of a page. *Pope.*

Ver. 308. *The bower*] This very infamous Countess of Shrewsbury was eldest daughter of Robert Brudenel, Earl of Cardigan. Her husband was killed March 16, 1667. She afterwards married George Rodney Bridges, Esq. second son of Sir Thomas Bridges of Keynsham in Somersetshire, Knt. and died April 20, 1702. The noble house of Cliveden, so delightfully and superbly situated on the banks of the Thames, which had been the residence of Frederick Prince of Wales, who lived in it for many years with a proper dignity and magnificence, attended by many of the first geniuses of the age, was unfortunately burnt to the ground in May, 1795, and nothing of its elegant furniture preserved from the flames but the fine tapestry that represented the Duke of Marlborough's victories. The beautiful Mask of Alfred was written and acted at Cliveden in 1744. In the duel mentioned above, the Duke of Buckingham had for his two seconds, captain Holmes and Mr. Jenkins. The Earl of Shrewsbury's seconds were Sir John Talbot of Laycock, and Mr. Bernard Howard. The Duke of Buckingham mortally wounded the Earl. *Warton.*

Ver. 312. *No fool to laugh at, which he valued more.*] That is, he liked disguised flattery better than the more direct and open. And no wonder, a man of wit should have this taste. For the taking pleasure in fools for the sake of *laughing at them*, is nothing else but the complaisance of *flattering ourselves*, by an advantageous comparison which the mind makes between itself and the object laughed at. Hence too, we may see the reason of men's

There, victor of his health, of fortune, friends,
And fame, this lord of useless thousands ends.
His Grace's fate sage Cutler could foresee,
And well (he thought) advis'd him, "Live like me."
As well his Grace replied: "Like you, Sir John?
That I can do, when all I have is gone."
Resolve me, Reason, which of these is worse,
Want with a full, or with an empty purse?
Thy life more wretched, Cutler, was confess'd;
Arise, and tell me, was thy death more bless'd?
Cutler saw tenants break, and houses fall,
For very want; he could not build a wall.
His only daughter in a stranger's power,
For very want; he could not pay a dower.
A few grey hairs his reverend temples crown'd;
'Twas very want that sold them for two pound.
What, even denied a cordial at his end,
Banish'd the doctor, and expell'd the friend?
What but a want, which you perhaps think mad,
Yet numbers feel, the want of what he had!
Cutler and Brutus, dying, both exclaim,
"Virtue! and wealth! what are ye but a name!"
Say, for such worth are other worlds prepar'd?
Or are they both, in this, their own reward?
A knotty point! to which we now proceed.
But you are tir'd—I'll tell a tale.—B. Agreed.

NOTES.

men's preferring this to every other kind of flattery. For we are always inclined to think that work done best which we do ourselves. *Warburton.*

VARIATIONS.

Ver. 337.] In the former editions:

That knotty point, my Lord, shall I discuss,
Or tell a tale?—A tale.—It follows thus. *Warburton.*

P. Where London's column, pointing at the skies,
Like a tall bully, lifts the head and lies; 340

COMMENTARY.

Ver. 339. *Where London's column, &c.*] For, the foregoing examples of *profusion* and *avarice* having been given, to shew that wealth misapplied was not *enjoyed*, it only remained to prove, that, in such circumstances, wealth became the *heaviest punishment;* and this was the very point to conclude with, as it is the great MORAL of this instructive Poem; which is to teach us, *how miserable men make themselves by not endeavouring to restrain the Ruling Passion, though it be indeed implanted in us by the Author of our Nature;* while, at the same time, it is an answer to the latter part of the question,

" Say, for such worth are other worlds prepar'd?
Or are they both, in this, their own reward?"

For the solution of which only, this example was jocularly pretended to have been given.

All this, the Poet has admirably supported in the artful construction of his fable of Sir Balaam; whose character is so drawn, as to let the reader see he had it in his power to regulate the *ruling Passion* by Reason, as having in himself the seeds of integrity, religion, and sobriety. These are all gradually worked out by an insatiable *thirst of wealth;* and this again (through a false sense of his own abilities in acquiring it) succeeded by as immoderate a *vanity:* which will lead us to another beauty in the management of the story. For, in order to see, in one concluding example, the miseries of exorbitant wealth, ill employed, it was necessary to set before the reader, at once, all the misuse that flowed both from *avarice* and *profusion*. The vices of the CITIZEN

NOTES.

Ver. 339. *Where London's column,*] The Monument built in memory of the fire of London, with an inscription importing that city to have been burnt by the Papists. *Pope.*

Ver. 340. *Like a tall* bully, *lifts the head and lies;*] It were to be wished, the *City monument* had been compared to something of more dignity; as, to the *Court-champion*, for instance, since, like him, it only spoke the sense of the Government. SCRIBL.

Warburton.

There dwelt a citizen of sober fame,
A plain good man, and Balaam was his name;
Religious, punctual, frugal, and so forth;
His word would pass for more than he was worth.
One solid dish his week-day meal affords,
An added pudding solemniz'd the Lord's:

COMMENTARY.

Citizen and the Noble, therefore, which were separated, and contrasted in the foregoing instances, are here shewn incorporated in a *Courtly Cit.* Perhaps it will be said, that the character has, by this means, the appearance of *two ruling Passions:* but those studied in human nature know the contrary; and that *alieni appetens, sui profusus,* is frequently as much one as either the profuse or avaricious apart. Indeed, this is so far from an inaccuracy, that it produces a new beauty. The *Ruling Passion* is of two kinds, the simple and the complex. The first sort, the Poet had given examples of before. Nothing then remained to complete his philosophic plan, but to conclude with the other. Let me only observe further, that the author, in this tale, has artfully summed up and recapitulated those three principal mischiefs in the *abuse* of money, which the *satirical* part of this Poem throughout was employed to expose, namely Avarice, Profusion, and Public Corruption:

"Constant

NOTES.

Ver. 341. *There dwelt a citizen*] This tale of Sir Balaam, his progress and change of manners, from being a plodding, sober, plain, and punctual citizen, to his becoming a debauched and dissolute courtier and senator, abounds in much knowledge of life, and many strokes of true humour, and will bear to be compared to the exquisite history of Eugenio and Crosodes in one of Swift's Intelligencers. *Warton.*

Ver. 346. *An added pudding*] It would be curious to trace the origin of this old English custom:

"With a pudding on *Sunday*, with stout humming liquor,
And remnants of Latin, to welcome the vicar!"

See that *old* excellent ballad, the "Old Man's Wish," where there is this note:

"Though

Constant at Church, and 'Change; his gains were sure,
His givings rare, save farthings to the poor.
The Devil was piqued such saintship to behold,
And long'd to tempt him like good Job of old:
But Satan now is wiser than of yore,
And tempts by making rich, not making poor.
Rous'd by the Prince of air, the whirlwinds sweep
The surge, and plunge his father in the deep;
Then full against his Cornish lands they roar,
And two rich shipwrecks bless the lucky shore.
Sir Balaam now, he lives like other folks,
He takes his chirping pint, and cracks his jokes:
"Live like yourself," was soon my Lady's word;
And lo! two puddings smok'd upon the board.

COMMENTARY.

"Constant at Church, and 'Change; his gains were sure,
His givings rare, save farthings to the poor."——
"Leaves the dull cits, and joins (to please the fair)
The well-bred cuckolds in St. James's air."——
"In Britain's senate he a seat obtains,
And one more pensioner St. Stephen gains."——

NOTES.

"Though the *Poet* never eats any, yet he provides this dish for his guests; but principally in observance of the *old* English *custom*, to let no Sunday pass without a pudding!!" *Bowles.*

Ver. 355. *Cornish*] The author has placed the scene of these shipwrecks in Cornwall, not only from their frequency on that coast, but from the inhumanity of the inhabitants to those to whom that misfortune arrives. When a ship happens to be stranded there, they have been known to bore holes in it, to prevent its getting off; to plunder, and sometimes even to massacre the people; nor has the Parliament of England been yet able wholly to suppress these barbarities. *Pope.*

Asleep and naked as an Indian lay,
An honest factor stole a gem away:
He pledg'd it to the Knight, the Knight had wit,
So kept the diamond, and the rogue was bit.
Some scruple rose, but thus he eas'd his thought:
"I'll now give sixpence where I gave a groat;
Where once I went to Church, I'll now go twice—
And am so clear too of all other vice."
The tempter saw his time; the work he plied;
Stocks and subscriptions pour on every side,
Till all the Demon makes his full descent
In one abundant shower of cent per cent,
Sinks deep within him, and possesses whole,
Then dubs Director, and secures his soul.
Behold Sir Balaam, now a man of spirit,
Ascribes his gettings to his parts and merit;
What late he call'd a blessing, now was wit,
And God's good Providence, a lucky hit.

NOTES.

Ver. 377. *What late he call'd a blessing, now was wit, &c.*] This is an admirable picture of human nature. In the entrance into life, all, but coxcombs born, are modest; and esteem the favours of their superiors as marks of their benevolence. But if these favours happen to increase; then, instead of advancing in gratitude to our benefactors, we only improve in the good opinion of ourselves; and the constant returns of such favours make us consider them no longer as accommodations to our wants, or the hire of our service, but debts due to our merit. Yet, at the same time, to do justice to our common nature, we should observe, that this does not proceed so often from downright vice as is imagined, but frequently from mere infirmity; of which the reason is evident; for, having small knowledge, and yet an excessive opinion of ourselves, we estimate our merit by the passions and caprice of others; and this perhaps would not be so much amiss, were we not apt to take their favours for a declaration of their sense of our merits.

Things change their titles, as our manners turn:
His counting-house employ'd the Sunday morn;
Seldom at Church ('twas such a busy life)
But duly sent his family and wife.
There (so the Devil ordain'd) one Christmas-tide
My good old Lady catch'd a cold, and died.
A nymph of quality admires our Knight;
He marries, bows at Court, and grows polite:
Leaves the dull cits, and joins (to please the fair)
The well-bred cuckolds in St. James's air:
First, for his son a gay commission buys,
Who drinks, whores, fights, and in a duel dies:
His daughter flaunts a Viscount's tawdry wife;
She bears a coronet and p—x for life.
In Britain's senate he a seat obtains,
And one more pensioner St. Stephen gains.
My Lady falls to play; so bad her chance,
He must repair it; takes a bribe from France;
The House impeach him; Coningsby harangues;
The Court forsake him, and Sir Balaam hangs:

NOTES.

merits. How often, for instance, has it been seen, in the three learned professions, that a man, who, had he continued in his primeval meanness, would have circumscribed his knowledge within the modest limits of Socrates; yet, being *pushed up*, as the phrase is, has felt himself growing into a *Hooker*, a *Hale*, or a *Sydenham;* while, in the rapidity of his course, he imagined he saw, at every new station, a new door of science opening to him, without so much as staying for a flatterer to let him in?

" —— Beatus enim jam
Cum pulchris tunicis sumet nova consilia." *Warburton.*

IMITATIONS.

Ver. 394. *And one more pensioner St. Stephen gains.*]
" —— atque unum civem donare *Sibyllæ.*" Juv.
Warburton.

Wife, son, and daughter, Satan! are thy own,
His wealth, yet dearer, forfeit to the crown:
The Devil and the King divide the prize,
And sad Sir Balaam curses God and dies.

NOTES.

Ver. 401. *The Devil and the King divide the prize,*] This is to be understood in a very sober and *decent* sense; as a satire only on such Ministers of State (which history informs us have been found) who aided the *Devil* in his *temptations*, in order to foment, if not to make, plots for the sake of confiscations. So sure always, and just, is our author's satire, even in those places where he seems most to have indulged himself only in an elegant *badinage*. But this satire on the abuse of the general laws of forfeiture for high treason, which laws all well-policied communities have found necessary, is by no means to be understood as a reflection on the laws themselves; whose necessity, equity, and even lenity, have been excellently well vindicated in that very learned and elegant Discourse, intitled, *Some considerations on the Law of Forfeiture for High Treason. Third Edition*, London, 1748. *Warburton.*

Methinks it was better in the former editions, because shorter:

" Wife, son, and daughter, Satan! are thy prize,
And sad Sir Balaam curses God and dies." *Warton.*

Ver. 402. *curses God.*] Alluding to the second chapter of the Book of Job: on which passage Warburton made (Divine Legation, book vi.) the following remarkable observation: " The wife of Job acts a small part in this drama, but a very spirited one. Then said his wife unto him, 'Dost thou still retain thy integrity? Curse God and die.' Tender and pious! He *might* see *by this prelude* of his spouse, what he was to expect from his friends. The Devil, indeed, *assaulted* Job, but he seems to have *got possession* of his wife!" p. 261. *Warton.*

Additional Note on The Man of Ross, referred to in

Ver. 284.] I am inclined to think that the singular character, Kyrle, who was in fact a " village Chandos," beneficent, charitable, but in a smaller sphere not unostentatious, was noticed by Pope, in consequence of a journey from Lord Bathurst's to Lord Oxford,

Oxford, in which he must pass through Ross. Kyrle died in 1724. The mind of the poet must have been warmed by what he heard and saw; and certainly he could not have described every thing so minutely, (though I cannot find the date of his visit,) without being an eye-witness.

The following more particular account of this extraordinary man is given in the words of his immediate descendant, the late Thomas Hutcheson, Barrister, whose sister, married to Mr. Jones, is now in possession of the property. *Bowles.*

OBSERVATIONS ON THE FACTS STATED BY POPE IN HIS MORAL ESSAYS, AS THEY RESPECT THE CHARACTER OF THE "MAN OF ROSS."

"Who hung with woods yon mountain's sultry brow?"

There was, and still is, a very long shady walk, of nearly a mile and a half in length, called Kyrle's Walks, which, whilst I had the estate, was kept in a good preservation, and is on the summit of an eminence, commanding a beautiful prospect of the river Wye and country to a great extent. There is a summer-house now remaining thereon, erected by the "Man of Ross," with a motto over the door, "Si non tibi non ibi."

"From the dry rock who bade the waters flow?"

The "Man of Ross" promoted, and partly assisted by his own pecuniary aid, the erection of a small water-work near the river Wye, which supplied the town of Ross with water, in which article it was very deficient before.

"Whose causeway parts the vale with shady rows?"

A causeway of the greatest safety to the country, in the time of floods, was, when surveyor of the roads, made by him; and his estate being on each side of it, he, I think, gave up some land for the conveniency of its erection, and caused the same to be completed.

"Whose seats the weary traveller repose?"

Seats were fixed by him in the walks first mentioned, which the different possessors of the estates kept, until lately, in good repair. The church-path being through them, also being a short way to Goodrich ferry, &c. they certainly afforded rest and pleasure to passengers, and to the inhabitants of the town of Ross.

"Who taught that heaven-directed spire to rise?"

The "Man of Ross" certainly first promoted the erection of that beautiful structure, both by his pecuniary aid and personal attention, each of which was considerable.

"*Behold*

" *Behold the market-place with poor o'erspread!*"

His house was opposite the market-place. He kept an open house every market-day: any person without distinction might meet on that day at his hospitable board, which, according to the stories related to me by some old tenants, consisted of a joint of meat of each sort. The poor, who were always in waiting on that day, and every other, had distributed to them, by his own superintendence, the whole of the remains of each day, besides continual distributions of bread, &c.

" *He feeds yon alms-house,*" *&c.*

He founded a small alms-house in Ross, and left an annual sum charged on his estate towards its assistance. His charities, whether by pecuniary aids, sustenance, or by the gift of medicines, were more than commensurate with his income. He was the constant and just arbitrator of all differences.

" *This man possess'd five hundred pounds a-year!*"

Miss Sarah Kyrle, afterwards Mrs. Hutcheson, being the niece of the " Man of Ross," inherited the estate, which then amounted to that sum, after the separation of some copyholds, which afterwards came to Robert Kyrle Hutcheson of Bath, Esq.; but his father having had eight children, and a power to charge the estate, it was so burdened as to prevent his keeping it; and accordingly he sold the greater part to his sister, now Mrs. Jones of Ross.

" *And what? no monument,*" *&c.*

There was erected, several years since, by the bounty of the Earl of Kinnoul, who was a cousin, by his father's marriage with Miss Vicentia Kyrle of Much Marcle, to the " Man of Ross," a very handsome monument, at the expense of upwards of two hundred pounds.

" *His race, his form, his name almost unknown?*"

The " Man of Ross" was of one of the best families in the county of Hereford, was allied to the Scudamores, the Traceys, the Clarkes, and all other the then principal private families; and the Kyrles, by marriage, brought into the Clarke family an estate, called the " Hill," of the value of two hundred pounds a-year.

The estates of Much Marcle, of the value of four thousand pounds per annum, belonged to his cousin, Sir John Kyrle, Bart. who left four daughters and no son; and I believe that the limitation was in the will to the heirs male general, and that they might have taken it, had he chosen. Splendid monuments of the family are

are to be seen in Much Marcle church, Walford, near Ross, and other places.

He wrote out his own pedigree on parchment, commencing in the reign of Henry the Seventh, now in Mr. Hutcheson's possession; and it is a very accurate and methodical arrangement. A good picture of him was at the inn, which had been his dwelling-house, but not an original, which the innkeeper, Ball, removed. There is an original picture in the possession of Mrs. Jones.

There are several little stories amongst the old people in the country, as to the plain attire of the "Man of Ross," and the consequent mistakes of persons seeing him in such, and their surprise when they approached his hospitable mansion to partake of his liberality, and witness his mode of living. This general outline, I submit, is fully sufficient to verify the truths which run through the whole of Pope's lines, in praise of the character which, from all I have learned, was only exaggerated by the elegance of the poetical writing.

EPISTLE IV.

OF

THE USE OF RICHES:

TO

RICHARD BOYLE,

EARL OF BURLINGTON.

"NEVER was protection and great wealth,"* says an able judge of the subject, "more generously and judiciously diffused than by this great person *(Lord Burlington)*, who had every quality of a genius and artist, except envy. Though his own designs were more chaste and classic than Kent's, he entertained him in his house till his death, and was more studious to extend his friend's fame than his own. As we have few samples of architecture more antique and imposing than the colonnade within the court of his house in Piccadilly, I cannot help mentioning the effect it had on myself. I had not only never seen it, but had never heard of it, at least with any attention, when, soon after my return from Italy, I was invited to a ball at Burlington-house. As I passed under the gate by night, it could not strike me. At day-break, looking out of the window to see the sun rise, I was surprised with the vision of the colonnade that fronted me. It seemed one of those edifices in Fairy tales, that are raised by genii in a night's time." Pope having appeared an excellent moralist in the foregoing Epistles, in this appears to be as excellent a connoisseur, and has given not only some of our first, but our best rules and observations on architecture and gardening, but particularly on the latter of these useful and entertaining arts, on which he has dwelt more largely, and with rather more knowledge of the subject. The following is copied *verbatim* from a little paper which he gave to Mr. Spence: "Arts are taken from nature; and, after a thousand vain efforts for improvements, are best when they return to their first simplicity. A sketch or analysis of the first principles of each art, with their first consequences, might be a thing of most excellent service. Thus, for instance, all the rules of architecture might be reducible to three or four heads; the justness of the openings; bearings upon bearings; the regularity of the pillars, &c. That which is not just in buildings is disagreeable to the eye (as a greater upon a lesser, &c.), and this may be called *the reasoning of the eye*. In laying out a garden, the first and chief thing to be considered is the genius of the place. Thus at Riskins, now called Piercy Lodge, Lord * * * should have raised two or three mounts, because his situation is all a plain, and nothing can please without variety."

* Mr. Walpole, p. 106. Anecdotes of Painting, vol. iv.

Mr. Walpole, in his elegant and entertaining History of Modern Gardening, has clearly proved that Kent was the artist to whom the English nation was chiefly indebted for diffusing a taste in laying out grounds, of which the French and Italians have no idea. But he adds, much to the credit of our author, that Pope undoubtedly contributed to form Kent's taste. The design of the Prince of Wales's garden at Carlton House was evidently borrowed from the Poet's at Twickenham. There was a little affected modesty in the latter, when he said, of all his works he was most proud of his garden. And yet it was a singular effort of art and taste, to impress so much variety and scenery on a spot of five acres. The passing through the gloom from the grotto to the opening day, the retiring and again assembling shades, the dusky groves, the larger lawn, and the solemnity of the termination at the cypresses that lead up to his mother's tomb, are managed with exquisite judgment; and though Lord Peterborough assisted him

" To form his quincunx, and to rank his vines,"

those were not the most pleasing ingredients of his little perspective. I do not know whether the disposition of the garden at Rousham, laid out by General Dormer, and, in my opinion, the most engaging of all Kent's works, was not planned on the model of Mr. Pope's, at least in the opening and retiring " shades of Venus's Vale."

It ought to be observed, that many years before this Epistle was written, and before Kent was employed as an improver of grounds, even so early as the year 1713, Pope seems to have been the very first person that censured and ridiculed the formal French, Dutch, false and unnatural mode in gardening, by a paper in the Guardian, No. 173, levelled against capricious operations of art, and every species of verdant sculpture and inverted nature; which paper abounds with wit as well as taste, and ends with a ridiculous catalogue of various figures cut in evergreens. Neither do I think that these four lines in this Epistle,

" Here Amphitrite sails thro' myrtle bowers;
There gladiators fight, or die in flowers:
Unwater'd see the drooping sea-horse mourn,
And swallows roost on Nilus' dusty urn;"

do at all excel the following passage in his Guardian:

" A citizen is no sooner proprietor of a couple of yews, but he entertains thoughts of erecting them into giants, like those of

Guildhall. I know of an eminent cook who beautified his country-seat with a coronation dinner in greens, where you see the champion flourishing on horseback at the end of the table, and the queen in perpetual youth at the other."

But it was the vigorous and creative imagination of Milton, superior to the prejudices of his time, that exhibited in his Eden the first hints and outlines of what a beautiful garden should be; for even his beloved Ariosto and Tasso, in their luxuriant pictures of the gardens of Alcina and Armida, shewed they were not free from the unnatural and narrow taste of their countrymen; and even his master, Spenser, has an artificial fountain in the midst of his bower of bliss.

I cannot forbear taking occasion to remark in this place, that in the sacred drama, intitled L'Adamo, written and published at Milan, in the year 1617, by Gio. Battista Andreini, a Florentine, which Milton certainly had read, (and of which Voltaire has given so false and so imperfect an account in his Essays on the Epic Poets,) the prints that are to represent Paradise are full of clipped hedges, square parterres, straight walks, trees uniformly lopped, regular knots and carpets of flowers, groves nodding at groves, marble fountains, and water-works. And yet these prints were designed by Carlo Antonio Proccaccini, a celebrated landscape painter of his time, and of the school of the Carraccis: many of those works are still admired at Milan. To every scene of this drama is prefixed a print of this artist's designing. The poem, though wild and incorrect, has many strokes of genius. The author was an actor.

It hence appears, that this enchanting art of modern gardening, in which this kingdom claims a preference over every nation in Europe, chiefly owes its origin and its improvements to two great poets, Milton and Pope. May I be suffered to add, in behalf of a favourite author, and who would have been a first-rate poet, if his style had been equal to his conceptions, that the Seasons of Thomson have been very instrumental in diffusing a general taste for the beauties of nature and landscape? *Warton.*

This was written the first of the author's Moral Epistles, and published in 1731, under the title "*On False Taste,*" but was afterwards arranged as the *fourth* in the edition of 1735, in which they were first united; it being supposed by the author that they

corresponded better, in this order, with the general plan which he had formed of a very extensive work, of which these were only to be the detached parts. This may serve to vindicate Warburton against the charge of Johnson, who says, that "in the Epistles to Lords Bathurst and *Burlington*, Warburton has endeavoured to find a train of thought which never was in the writer's head; and to support his hypothesis has printed that first which was published last." Warburton has printed them in the same order in which they were arranged by Pope, and in which they were reprinted several times before Warburton's edition.

EPISTLE IV.

OF THE USE OF RICHES.

ARGUMENT.

The Vanity of Expense in People of Wealth and Quality. The abuse of the word Taste, Ver. 13. *That the first principle and foundation in this, as in every thing else, is* Good Sense, Ver. 40. *The chief proof of it is to* follow Nature, *even in works of Luxury and Elegance. Instanced in* Architecture *and* Gardening, *where all must be adapted to the* Genius *and* Use *of the* Place, *and the Beauties not forced into it, but resulting from it,* Ver. 50. *How men are disappointed in their most expensive undertakings, for want of this true Foundation, without which nothing can please* long, *if* at all: *and the best* Examples *and* Rules *will be but perverted into something* burdensome *and* ridiculous, Ver. 65, &c. to 92. *A description of the* false Taste *of* Magnificence; *the first grand Error of which is to imagine that* Greatness *consists in the* Size *and* Dimension, *instead of the* Proportion *and* Harmony *of the* whole, Ver. 97. *and the second, either in joining together* Parts incoherent, *or too* minutely resembling, *or in the* Repetition *of the* same *too frequently,* Ver. 105, &c. *A word or two of false Taste in* Books, *in* Music, *in* Painting, *even in* Preaching *and* Prayer, *and lastly in* Entertainments, Ver. 133, &c. *Yet* PROVIDENCE *is justified in giving Wealth to be squandered in this manner, since it is dispersed to the Poor and laborious part of mankind,* Ver. 169, [*recurring to what is laid down in the first book, Ep.* ii. *and in the Epistle preceding this,* Ver. 159, &c.] *What are the* proper Objects *of Magnificence, and a proper field for the Expense of* Great *Men,* Ver. 177, &c. *And finally the great and public Works which become a* Prince, Ver. 191, to the end.

EPISTLE IV.

OF THE USE OF RICHES.

WITH THE COMMENTARY OF WILLIAM WARBURTON, D. D.

'Tis strange, the Miser should his cares employ
To gain those Riches he can ne'er enjoy:
Is it less strange, the Prodigal should waste
His wealth, to purchase what he ne'er can taste?

COMMENTARY.

Epistle IV.] The extremes of *Avarice* and *Profusion* being treated of in the foregoing Epistle; this takes up one branch of the latter, the *Vanity of expensive Taste*, in people of wealth and condition; and is therefore a corollary to the preceding, just as the Epistle on the *Characters of Women* is to that *of the Knowledge and Characters of Men*. It is equally estimable with the rest, as on other accounts, so likewise for exactness of method. But the nature of the subject, which is less philosophical, makes it capable of being analysed in a less compass.

Ver. 1. *'Tis strange, &c.*] The Poet's introduction (from ver. 1 to 39.) consists of a very curious remark, arising from his intimate knowledge of nature; together with an illustration of that remark, taken from his observations on life. It is this, that the Prodigal no more *enjoys* his profusion, than the Miser his rapacity. It was generally thought that *Avarice* only *kept*, without enjoyment; but the Poet here first acquaints us with a circumstance in human life, much more to be lamented, viz. that *Profusion* too can *communicate*, without it; whereas *Enjoyment* was thought to be as peculiarly the reward of the *beneficent* passions (of which this has the appearance), as *want of enjoyment* was the punishment of the *selfish*. The phenomenon

NOTES.

Ver. 1. *'Tis strange,*] This Epistle was written and published before the preceding one; and the placing it after the third, has occasioned some aukward anachronisms and inconsistencies.

Warton.

Not for himself he sees, or hears, or eats;
Artists must chuse his pictures, music, meats:
He buys for Topham, drawings and designs,
For Pembroke, statues, dirty Gods, and coins;

COMMENTARY.

phenomenon observed is odd enough. But if we look more narrowly into this matter, we shall find, that Prodigality, when in pursuit of *Taste*, is only a *mode of vanity*, and consequently as *selfish* a passion as even Avarice itself; and it is of the ordonnance and constitution of all selfish passions, when growing to an excess, to defeat their own end, which is *Self-enjoyment*. But besides the accurate philosophy of this observation, there is a fine morality contained in it; namely, that *ill-got* wealth is not only as *unreasonably*, but as *uncomfortably*, squandered, as it was raked together; which the Poet himself further insinuates in ver. 15:

"What brought Sir Visto's *ill-got wealth* to waste?"

He then illustrates the above observation by divers examples in every branch of *wrong Taste;* and to set their absurdities in the strongest light, he, in conclusion, contrasts them with several instances of the *true*, in the Nobleman to whom the Epistle is addressed. This disposition is productive of various beauties; for, by this means, the introduction becomes an epitome of the body of

NOTES.

Ver. 7. *Topham,*] A Gentleman famous for a judicious collection of drawings. *Pope.*

Ver. 8. *For Pembroke, statues, dirty Gods, and coins;*] The author speaks here not as a philosopher, or divine, but as a connoisseur and antiquary only. Consequently, the *dirty* attribute here assigned these Gods of old renown, is not in disparagement of their worth, but in defence of their genuine pretensions.

SCRIBL. *Warburton.*

Ver. 8. *For Pembroke, statues,*] "The soul of Inigo Jones," says Mr. Walpole, "which had been patronized by the ancestors of Henry, Earl of Pembroke, seemed still to hover over its favourite Wilton, and to have assisted the Muses of Arts in the education of this noble person. The towers, the chambers, the scenes which Holbein, Jones, and Vandyck had decorated, and which Earl Thomas had enriched with the spoils of the best ages, received the last touches of beauty from Earl Henry's hand." *Warton.*

Rare monkish manuscripts for Hearne alone,
And books for Mead, and butterflies for Sloane.
Think we all these are for himself? no more
Than his fine wife, alas! or finer whore.

For what has Virro painted, built, and planted?
Only to show, how many tastes he wanted.
What brought Sir Visto's ill-got wealth to waste?
Some Demon whisper'd, "Visto! have a taste."
Heaven visits with a taste the wealthy fool,
And needs no rod but Ripley with a rule.
See! sportive fate, to punish awkward pride,
Bids Bubo build, and sends him such a guide:

COMMENTARY.

of the Epistle; which, as we shall see, consists of general reflections on *Taste*, and particular examples of bad and good. And his friend's example concluding the introduction, leads the Poet gracefully into the subject itself; for the Lord, here celebrated for his good taste, was now at hand to deliver the first and fundamental precept of it himself, which gives authority and dignity to all that follow.

NOTES.

Ver. 10. *And books for Mead, and butterflies for Sloane.*] Two eminent Physicians: the one had an excellent library, the other the finest collection in Europe of natural curiosities; both men of great learning and humanity. *Pope.*

Ver. 11. *Think we all these*] The ostentation of this man of false taste is only here ridiculed; he has no enjoyment of either of the two objects of false magnificence here mentioned. *Warton.*

Ver. 18. *Ripley*] This man was a carpenter, employed by a first Minister, who raised him to an architect, without any genius in the art; and after some wretched proofs of his insufficiency in public buildings, made him Comptroller of the Board of Works. *Pope.*

Mr. Walpole speaks more favourably of this architect. *Warton.*

Ver. 19. *See! sportive fate, to punish awkward pride,*] Pride is one of the greatest mischiefs, as well as highest absurdities of our nature;

A standing sermon, at each year's expense,
That never coxcomb reach'd magnificence!
You show us, Rome was glorious, not profuse,
And pompous buildings once were things of use.
Yet shall (my Lord) your just, your noble rules,
Fill half the land with imitating fools;
Who random drawings from your sheets shall take,
And of one beauty many blunders make;
Load some vain Church with old theatric state,
Turn arcs of triumph to a garden-gate;

NOTES.

nature; and therefore, as appears both from profane and sacred history, has ever been the more peculiar object of divine vengeance. But *aukward Pride* intimates such abilities in its owner, as eases us of the apprehension of much mischief from it; so that the Poet supposes such a one secure from the serious resentment of Heaven, though it may permit *fate* or *fortune* to bring him into that public contempt and ridicule, which his natural badness of heart so well deserves. *Warburton.*

Ver. 20. *Bids Bubo build,*] He means Bub Dodington's magnificent palace at Eastbury near Blandford, which he had just finished. *Bowles.*

Ver. 23.] The Earl of Burlington was then publishing the Designs of Inigo Jones, and the Antiquities of Rome by Palladio. *Pope.*

Ver. 29. *Load some vain Church with old theatric state,*] In which there is a complication of absurdities, arising both from their different *natures* and *forms*. For the one being for *religious service*, and the other only for *civil amusement*, it is impossible that the profuse and lascivious ornaments of the latter should become the modesty and sanctity of the other. Nor will any examples of this

VARIATIONS.

After Ver. 22. in the MS.

Must bishops, lawyers, statesmen have the skill
To build, to plant, judge paintings, what you will?
Then why not Kent as well our treaties draw,
Bridgman explain the gospel, Gibbs the law? *Warburton.*

Reverse your ornaments, and hang them all
On some patch'd dog-hole eked with ends of wall;

NOTES.

this vanity of dress in the sacred buildings of antiquity justify this imitation; for those ornaments might be very suitable to a Temple of Bacchus or Venus, which would ill become the sobriety and purity of the Christian Religion.

Besides, it should be considered, that the form of a Theatre would not permit the architectonic ornaments to be placed but on the outward face; whereas those of a *Church* may be as commodiously, and are more properly, put within; particularly in great and close pent-up cities, where the incessant driving of the smoke, in a little time, corrodes and destroys all outward ornaments of this kind; especially if the members, as in the common taste, be small and little.

Our Gothic ancestors had juster and manlier notions of magnificence, on Greek and Roman ideas, than these mimics of *Taste*, who profess to study only classic elegance. And because the thing does honour to the genius of those barbarians, I shall endeavour to explain it. All our ancient Churches are called without distinction, *Gothic;* but erroneously. They are of two sorts; the one built in the *Saxon* times; the other in the *Norman*. Several *Cathedral* and *Collegiate* Churches of the first sort are yet remaining, either in the whole or in part: of which, this was the original. When the Saxon kings became Christian, their piety, (which was the piety of the times) consisted in building Churches at home, and performing pilgrimages abroad, especially to the Holy Land: and these spiritual exercises assisted and supported one another. For the most venerable as well as most elegant models of religious edifices were then in Palestine. From these our Saxon builders took the whole of their ideas, as may be seen by comparing the drawings which travellers have given us of the Churches yet standing in that country, with the Saxon remains of what we find at home; and particularly in that sameness of style in the *later* religious edifices of the Knights Templars (professedly built upon the model of the church of the Holy Sepulchre at Jerusalem) with the earlier remains of our Saxon edifices. Now the architecture of the Holy Land was Grecian, but greatly fallen from its ancient elegance.

Then clap four slices of pilaster on't,
That, lac'd with bits of rustic, makes a front;

NOTES.

elegance. Our Saxon performance was indeed a bad copy of it; and as much inferior to the works of St. Helene and Justinian, as theirs were to the Grecian models they had followed. Yet still the footsteps of ancient art appeared in the circular arches, the entire columns, the division of the entablature, into a sort of Architrave, Frize, and Corniche, and a solidity equally diffused over the whole mass. This, by way of distinction, I would call the SAXON architecture.

But our Norman works had a very different original. When the *Goths* had conquered Spain, and the genial warmth of the climate, and the religion of the old inhabitants, had ripened their wits, and inflamed their mistaken piety, (both kept in exercise by the neighbourhood of the Saracens, through emulation of their science and aversion to their superstition) they struck out a new species of architecture unknown to Greece and Rome; upon original principles and ideas much nobler than what had given birth even to classical magnificence. For this northern people having been accustomed, during the gloom of Paganism, to worship the Deity in GROVES (a practice common to all nations), when their new religion required covered edifices, they ingeniously projected to make them resemble *Groves*, as nearly as the distance of architecture would permit; at once indulging their old prejudices, and providing for their present conveniences, by a cool receptacle in a sultry climate. And with what skill and success they executed the project by the assistance of Saracen Architects, whose exotic style of building very luckily suited their purpose, appears from hence, That no attentive observer ever viewed a regular avenue of well-grown trees, intermixing their branches over head, but it presently put him in mind of the long visto through a Gothic Cathedral; or ever entered one of the larger and more elegant edifices of this kind, but it represented to his imagination an avenue of trees. And this alone is what can be truly called the GOTHIC style of building.

Under this idea, of so extraordinary a species of architecture, all the irregular transgressions against art, all the monstrous offences against nature, disappear; every thing has its reason, every thing

Shall call the winds thro' long arcades to roar,
Proud to catch cold at a Venetian door;

NOTES.

thing is in order, and an harmonious whole arises from the studious application of means, proper and proportioned to the end. For could the *Arches* be otherwise than *pointed* when the workman was to imitate that curve which branches of two opposite trees make by their intersection with one another? Or could the *Columns* be otherwise than split into distinct shafts, when they were to represent the stems of a clump of trees growing close together? On the same principles they formed the spreading ramification of the stone-work in the windows, and the stained glass in the interstices; the one to represent the branches, and the other the leaves, of an opening grove; and both concurred to preserve that gloomy light which inspires religious reverence and dread. Lastly, we see the reason of their studied aversion to *apparent* solidity in these stupendous masses, deemed so absurd by men accustomed to the *apparent* as well as *real* strength of Grecian architecture. Had it been only a wanton exercise of the artist's skill, to shew he could give real strength without the appearance of any, we might indeed admire his superior science, but we must needs condemn his ill judgment. But when one considers, that this surprising lightness was necessary to complete the execution of his idea of a sylvan place of worship, one cannot sufficiently admire the ingenuity of the contrivance.

This too will account for the contrary qualities in what I call the *Saxon Architecture*. These artists copied, as has been said, from the churches in the Holy Land, which were built on the models of the Grecian architecture; but corrupted by prevailing barbarism; and still further depraved by a religious idea. The first places of Christian worship were sepulchres and subterraneous caverns, low and heavy from necessity. When Christianity became the Religion of the State, and sumptuous Temples began to be erected, they yet, in regard to the first pious ages, preserved the massive style; made still more venerable by the *Church of the Holy Sepulchre;* where this style was, on a double account, followed and aggravated.

Such as is here described was GOTHIC ARCHITECTURE. And it would

Conscious they act a true Palladian part,
And if they starve, they starve by rules of art.
Oft have you hinted to your brother Peer,
A certain truth, which many buy too dear: 40

COMMENTARY.

Ver. 39. *Oft have you hinted to your brother Peer,*
A certain truth,—]
and in this artful manner begins the body of the Epistle.

I.

The first part of it (from ver. 38 to 99.) delivers rules for attaining to the MAGNIFICENT in just expense; which is the same in building

NOTES.

would be no discredit to the warmest admirers of *Jones* and *Palladio* to acknowledge it hath its merit. They must at least confess it had a nobler birth, though a humbler fortune, than the GREEK and ROMAN ARCHITECTURE.—The reader may see Sir Christopher Wren's account of this matter from some papers of his, published since the printing this, in a book called *Parentalia*, page 273—297—306-7-8—355, and then judge for himself.
Warburton.

See Wren's Parentalia, the Preface to Bentham's History of Ely Cathedral, in which it is said he was assisted by Gray.
Warton.

Ver. 30. *Turn arcs of triumph to a garden-gate;*] This absurdity seems to have arisen from an injudicious imitation of what these builders might have heard of, at the entrance of the ancient gardens of Rome. But they do not consider, that those were *public Gardens*, given to the people by some great man after a triumph; to which, therefore, *Arcs* of this kind were very suitable ornaments. *Warburton.*

Ver. 36. *Proud to catch cold at a Venetian door;*] In the foregoing instances, the poet exposes the absurd imitation of foreign and discordant *manners* in *public* buildings; here he turns to the still greater absurdity of taking their models from a discordant *climate*, in their *private;* which folly, he supposes, may be more easily redressed, as men will be sooner brought to feel for themselves than to see for the public. *Warburton.*

Something there is more needful than expense,
And something previous even to taste—'tis sense:
Good sense, which only is the gift of Heaven,
And though no science, fairly worth the seven:
A light, which in yourself you must perceive;
Jones and Le Nôtre have it not to give.
To build, to plant, whatever you intend,
To rear the column, or the arch to bend;

COMMENTARY.

building and planting, that the SUBLIME is in painting and poetry; and consequently, the qualities necessary for the attainment of both must be analogous.

1. The first and fundamental, he shews (from ver. 38 to 47.) to be SENSE:

" *Good sense*, which only is the gift of Heaven;
And tho' no science, fairly worth the seven."

And for that reason; not only as it is the foundation and parent of them all, and the constant regulator and director of their operations; or, as the Poet better expresses it,—*of every art the soul;* but likewise as it alone can, in case of need, very often supply the offices of every one of them.

Ver. 47. *To build, to plant, &c.*] 2. The next quality, for dignity and use, is TASTE, and but the next. For, as the Poet truly observes, there is—*something previous even to taste—'tis sense;* and this in the order of things. For *Sense* is a taste and true conception of *Nature;* and *Taste* is a sense or true conception of *beautiful Nature*; but we must first know the essences of things, before we can judge truly of their qualities. The business of *Taste*, therefore, in the pursuit of *magnificence*, is, as the Poet shews us (from ver. 46 to 65.), 1. (to ver. 51.) To catch or lay hold on *Nature*, where she appears most in her charms. 2. (to ver. 57.) To

NOTES.

Ver. 46. *Jones and Le Nôtre have it not to give.*] Inigo Jones, the celebrated architect, and M. Le Nôtre, the designer of the best gardens of France. *Pope.*

To swell the terrace, or to sink the grot;
In all, let Nature never be forgot. 50

COMMENTARY.

To adorn her, when taken, as best suits her dignity and quality; that is, to dress her in the light and modest habit of a virgin, not load her with the gaudy ornaments of a prostitute. This rule observed, will prevent a transgression in the following, which is, not to let all her beauties be seen at once, but in succession; for that advantage is inseparable from a graceful and well-dressed person. 3. (to ver. 65.) To take care that the ornaments be well directed to that part, which it is your purpose to adorn; and as, in dressing out a modest Fair (which is the Poet's own comparison,) the colours are suited to her complexion; the stuff, to the proportion of her person; and the fashion, to her air and shape; so in ornamenting a villa, *the rise or fall of waters* should correspond to its acclivities or declivities; the *artificial hills or vales*, to its cover or exposure; and the manner of *calling in the country*, to the disposition of its aspect. But again, as in the illustration, whatever be the variety in colour, stuff, or fashion, they must still be so suited with respect to one another, as to produce an agreement and harmony in their assemblage: so woods, waters, mountains, vales, and vistas must, amidst all their diversity, be so disposed with a relation to each other, as to create a perfect symmetry resulting from the whole; and this, the *Genius* of the place, when religiously consulted, will never fail to inform us of; who, as the Poet says,

" Now breaks, or now directs, th' intending lines;
Paints as you plant, and, as you work, designs."

And this is a full and complete description of the *office of Taste.*

NOTES.

Ver. 50. *In all, let Nature*] In Castell's Villas of the Ancients, folio, London, 1728, may be seen how much the celebrated Tuscan villa resembled our gardens, as they were planned a few years ago. Pliny's villa was like his genius. *Warton.*

Ver. 50. *In all, let Nature*] Notwithstanding all the objections which of late have been made to the method of laying out grounds pursued by Brown, &c. it ought always to be remembered, that both Pope and Kent and Shenstone, and afterwards Brown (for

But treat the Goddess like a modest fair,
Nor over-dress, nor leave her wholly bare;
Let not each beauty every where be spied,
Where half the skill is decently to hide.

NOTES.

I do not mention Milton, because he was not a practical gardener), were the first who *approached* towards Nature, in discarding the artificial style and trim quaintnesses which were considered the great ornaments of garden-scenery before their time. Let them at least have this merit. If, as is very true, they carried their ideas *too far;* if their perpetual *line* of *beauty* be tiresome, and their ornaments, the laurel circuses, their "terminated points," the *edged waters*, are to the eye of the GREAT POET or PAINTER but so many littlenesses, as *insipid* as the artificial objects, the clipped hedges, and the cut yews they supplanted, were *unnatural;* yet the merit of having first opened the eye of taste to *more natural* combinations of beauty, ought not to be denied them. Nor should they be decried as the *subverters* of rural beauty, instead of being considered the *first promoters;* for no one can say but that *clumps*, however *round* and black, are handsomer, and more natural, than *trees* cut into "dragons," &c.

It remained for an ingenious and eloquent writer of the present age, a gentleman of fortune,* of taste, and originality of thinking, accurately to distinguish the characters of the "*beautiful* and *picturesque;*" and he has opened the English eye to ampler and nobler views of Landscape Gardening; such as Milton, when he meditated his sublimest rural picture, would have approved. I still, however, think he carries his ideas, particularly respecting foregrounds, too far; and that he is somewhat too hard in his strictures on those who, after all, were the first to inculcate, whatever might have been their practice,

"—— let NATURE never be forgot!"

Dr. Warton mentions Milton and Pope as the Poets to whom English Landscape is indebted. He forgot poor Shenstone!

Bowles.

Ver. 53. *Let not each beauty every where be spied,*
Where half the skill is decently to hide.]

The late lamented Thomas Warton, in his excellent edition of Milton's

* Essay on the Picturesque, by H. Price, Esq.

He gains all points, who pleasingly confounds,
Surprizes, varies, and conceals the bounds.
Consult the genius of the place in all;
That tells the waters, or to rise or fall;

NOTES.

Milton's Poems, has, as usual, with as much taste as good sense, most clearly elucidated this point:

" Where only a little is seen, more is left to the imagination. These symptoms of an old palace, especially when thus disposed, have a greater effect, than a discovery of larger parts, and a full display of the whole. The embosomed battlements, and the spreading top of the tall grove, on which they reflect a reciprocal charm, still further interest the fancy; whilst *just enough* of the *towering structure* is shewn, to make an accompaniment to the tufted expanse of venerable verdure, and to compose a picturesque association. Modern seats are seldom so deeply ambushed: they disclose their glories at once, and never excite expectation by concealment, by gradual approaches, and by interrupted appearances." Edition of Milton, p. 54. *Bowles.*

Ver. 57. *Consult the genius of the place, &c.*] The personalizing, or rather *deifying*, the Genius of the place, in order to be consulted as an *oracle*, has produced one of the noblest and most sublime descriptions of *Design*, that poetry could express; where this *Genius*, while presiding over the work, is represented by little and little, as advancing from a simple *adviser*, to a *Creator* of all the beauties of improved nature, in a variety of bold metaphors and allusions, all rising one above another, till they complete the unity of the general idea. *Warburton.*

Ver. 58. *That tells the waters,*] Would it not give life and vigour to this noble *prosopopœia*, if we were to venture to alter only one word, and read, in the second line,

He tells the waters———

instead of

That tells?———

Our author is never happier than in his allusions to painting, an art he so much admired and understood. So below, at ver. 81.

" The

Or helps th' ambitious hill the heavens to scale,
Or scoops in circling theatres the vale;
Calls in the country, catches opening glades,
Joins willing woods, and varies shades from shades;
Now breaks, or now directs, th' intending lines;
Paints as you plant, and, as you work, designs.
Still follow sense, of every art the soul;
Parts answering parts shall slide into a whole,

COMMENTARY.

Ver. 65. *Still follow sense, &c.*] But now when *good Sense* has led us up to *Taste*, our fondness for the elegances of our new mistress, oftentimes occasions us to neglect the plainness and simplicity of the old; we are but too apt to forsake our guide, and to give ourselves up solely to *Taste*. Our author's next rule, therefore, 3. is, *Still to follow Sense*, and let *Sense* perpetually accompany us through all the works of *Taste*:

" Still follow sense, of every art the *soul*."

That is, *good Sense* should never be a moment absent from the works of *Taste*, any more than the soul from the body; for just as the soul animates and informs every air and feature of a beauteous body, so *Sense* gives life and vigour to all the productions of *Taste*.

Ver. 66. *Parts answering parts, &c.*] The Poet then explains the particular advantages of the union of Sense with Taste (from this verse to 71.). 1. That the beautiful parts which *Taste* has laid out and contrived, *Sense* makes to answer to one another, and to *slide* naturally, without violence, *into a whole*. 2. That many beauties will *spontaneously* offer themselves, suggested from the very necessity which *Sense* lays upon us, of conforming the parts to the whole, which no original invention of *Taste* would have supplied.

NOTES.

" The wood *supports* the plain, the parts *unite*,
And *strength* of *shade* contends with *strength* of *light*."

Indeed, the two arts in question differ only in the materials which they employ. *Warton.*

Spontaneous beauties all around advance,
Start even from difficulty, strike from chance;
Nature shall join you; time shall make it grow
A work to wonder at—perhaps a STOWE.
Without it, proud Versailles! thy glory falls;
And Nero's terraces desert their walls:

COMMENTARY.

supplied. 3. A third advantage is, that you are then always sure to have *Nature on your side;*

" Nature shall join you"——

The expression is important; when we were bid to *begin with Sense*, we were shewn how this would lead us to *Taste* in the pursuit of *Nature:* but now, that he bids us to go on with Sense, or *still to follow it*, after having arrived at *Taste*, he tells us, that *Nature*, will then join us of her own accord. This has a great beauty, which arises from the philosophic truth of the observation. For as we observed before, *Sense* being a right conception of *Nature*, and *Taste* a right conception of *beautiful Nature;* when these are in conjunction, Nature can stand out no longer, but presents herself to you without further pains or search.

Ver. 71. *Without it, proud Versailles! &c.*] To illustrate this doctrine, the Poet next shews us (from ver. 70 to 99.), that without this continued support of *good Sense*, things even of the *highest Taste*

NOTES.

Ver. 69. *Nature shall join you;*] I recollect no Ancient that had so just a taste as Atticus, who preferred Tully's house at Arpinum to all his other houses; declaring a contempt of the laboured magnificence, marble pavements, artificial canals, and forced streams of the villas of Italy, compared with the natural beauties of this place. De Legibus, lib. ii.

Every reader of taste, we presume, must be acquainted with the English Garden of Mr. Mason, and with the commentary and notes upon it by Mr. Burgh. *Warton.*

Ver. 70.] The seat and gardens of the Lord Viscount Cobham in Buckinghamshire. *Pope.*

Ver. 71. *proud Versailles!*] Every instance of false taste and false magnificence is to be found at Versailles. *Warton.*

The vast parterres a thousand hands shall make,
Lo! COBHAM comes, and floats them with a lake:
Or cut wide views thro' mountains to the plain,
You'll wish your hill or shelter'd seat again.

COMMENTARY.

Taste and *utmost Magnificence*, such as the Buildings of *Versailles*, the gardens of *Villario*, and the groves of *Sabinus* (which are the instances he gives), all, in a very little time, come to nothing; and no wonder: for the exercise of *Taste* WITHOUT SENSE is, where something that is *not beautiful Nature* is mistaken for it, and *ornamented* as beautiful Nature should be; these ornaments, therefore, being destitute of all real support, must be continually subject to change. Sometimes the owner himself will grow weary of them (as in the case of *Villario*), and find at last, that *Nature* is to be preferred before them:

" Tir'd of the scene *parterres* and *fountains* yield,
He finds at last, he better likes a *field*."

sometimes, again, the heir (like *Sabinus*'s) will be changing a bad taste for a worse:

" One *boundless green*, or *flourish'd carpet* views,
With all the *mournful family* of yews."

So that *mere Taste* standing exposed between the *true* and *false*, like the decent man between the rigidly virtuous and thoroughly profligate, hated and despised by both, can never long support itself: and with this, the first part of the Epistle concludes.

NOTES.

Ver. 74. *Lo! COBHAM comes, and floats them with a lake;*] A high compliment to the noble person on whom it is bestowed, as making him the *substitute of good sense*. This office, in the original plan of the Poem, was given to another man of taste, Bridgman; who not having the sense to see that a compliment was intended him, it convinced the Poet that it did not belong to him.

Warburton.

Ver. 75, 76. *Or cut wide views thro' mountains to the plain,*
You'll wish your hill or shelter'd seat again.]

This was done in Hertfordshire by a wealthy citizen, at the expense

Even in an ornament its place remark,
Nor in a hermitage set Dr. Clarke.
Behold Villario's ten years' toil complete;
His quincunx darkens, his espaliers meet;
The wood supports the plain, the parts unite,
And strength of shade contends with strength of light;

NOTES.

pense of above 5,000*l.* by which means (merely to overlook a dead plain) he let in the north wind upon his house and parterre, which were before adorned and defended by beautiful woods. *Pope.*

Ver. 77. *Even in an ornament*] These lines are as ill-placed, and as injudicious, as the busto they were designed to censure. Pope imbibed an aversion to this excellent man from Bolingbroke, who hated Clarke, not only because he had written a book which this declamatory philosopher could not confute, but because he was a favourite of Queen Caroline. In Pope's MSS. were two lines on Dr. *Alured Clarke*, Dean of *Exeter*, who must not be confounded with the *Rector* of *St. James's:*

" Let Clarke tire half his days the poor's support,
But let him pass the other half at Court;"

for he was instrumental in building our two first county hospitals at Winchester and at Exeter. *Warton.*

Ver. 78. *set Dr. Clarke.*] Dr. S. Clarke's busto placed by the Queen in the Hermitage, while the Doctor duly frequented the Court. *Pope.*

But he should have added—with the innocence and disinterestedness of a hermit. *Warburton.*

Ver. 82. *And strength of shade*] After celebrating Kent as very instrumental in promoting the new and just taste in gardening, Mr. Walpole adds: "Just as the encomiums are that I have bestowed on Kent, he was neither without assistance nor faults. Whoever would search for his faults, will find an ample crop in a very favourite work of his, the Prints for Spenser's Fairy Queen. As the drawings were exceedingly cried up by his admirers, the blame was unjustly thrown on the engraver. His celebrated monument of Shakespeare in the Abbey was preposterous." *Warton.*

A waving glow the bloomy beds display,
Blushing in bright diversities of day,
With silver-quivering rills meander'd o'er—
Enjoy them, you! Villario can no more;
Tir'd of the scene parterres and fountains yield,
He finds at last, he better likes a field.
Thro' his young woods how pleas'd Sabinus stray'd,
Or sat delighted in the thickening shade,
With annual joy the reddening shoots to greet,
Or see the stretching branches long to meet!
His son's fine taste an opening vista loves,
Foe to the dryads of his father's groves;
One boundless green, or flourish'd carpet views,
With all the mournful family of yews;

NOTES.

Ver. 88. *he better likes a field.*] The late Earl of Leicester, being complimented upon the completion of his great design at Holkham, replied: "It is a melancholy thing to stand alone in one's country. I look round; not a house is to be seen but mine. I am the giant of Giant-castle, and have ate up all my neighbours." *Warton.*

Whatever may be the authority on which Dr. Warton has given this anecdote, it is directly contradicted by the inscription placed by Lord Leicester over the entrance door of the great Hall at Holkham.

"THIS SEAT, ON AN OPEN BARREN ESTATE, WAS PLANNED, PLANTED, BUILT, DECORATED, AND INHABITED, THE MIDDLE OF THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY,
BY THOMAS COKE,
EARL OF LEICESTER."

Ver. 95.] The two extremes in parterres, which are equally faulty; a *boundless green*, large and naked as a field, or a *flourished carpet*, where the greatness and nobleness of the piece is lessened by being divided into too many parts, with scrolled works and beds, of which the examples are frequent. *Pope.*

The thriving plants, ignoble broomsticks made,
Now sweep those alleys they were born to shade.
At Timon's villa let us pass a day,
Where all cry out, "What sums are thrown away!"

COMMENTARY.

II.

Ver. 99. *At* Timon's *villa, &c.*] As the first part ended with exposing the works of *Taste without Sense*, the second begins with a description (from ver. 98 to 173.) of *false Magnificence* WITHOUT EITHER SENSE OR TASTE, in the gardens, buildings, table furniture, library, and way of living of Lord *Timon;* who, in none of these, could distinguish between greatness and vastness; between regularity and form; between dignity and state; nor between learning and pedantry. But what then? says the Poet, resuming here the great principle of his Philosophy (which these Moral Epistles were written to illustrate, and consequently, on which they are all regulated), though

"Heaven visits with a taste the wealthy fool,
And needs no *rod* ——"

yet the punishment is confined as it ought; and the evil is turned to the benefit of others: for

"— hence the poor are cloth'd, the hungry fed;
Health to himself, and to his infants bread
The labourer bears; what his *hard heart* denies,
His *charitable vanity* supplies."

NOTES.

Ver. 96. *mournful family of yews*;] Touches upon the ill taste of those who are so fond of evergreens (particularly Yews, which are the most tonsile,) as to destroy the nobler forest-trees to make way for such little ornaments as pyramids of dark green continually repeated, not unlike a funeral procession. *Pope.*

Ver. 99. *At* Timon's *villa.*] This description is intended to comprise the principles of a false taste of magnificence, and to exemplify what was said before, that nothing but good sense can attain it. *Pope.*

Ver. 99. *At Timon's villa let us pass a day,*] This is the passage which afforded the enemies of Pope an opportunity of accusing him of ingratitude to the Duke of Chandos, with whom he was said

So proud, so grand; of that stupendous air,
Soft and agreeable come never there.
Greatness, with Timon, dwells in such a draught
As brings all Brobdignag before your thought.
To compass this, his building is a town,
His pond an ocean, his parterre a down:
Who but must laugh, the master when he sees,
A puny insect, shivering at a breeze!
Lo, what huge heaps of littleness around!
The whole, a labour'd quarry above ground.

NOTES.

said to have lived in familiarity, and, on one occasion, to have received from him a present of 500*l*. This report Pope publicly and indignantly contradicted in the lifetime of the Duke. See the Note on ver. 375, of the Prologue to the Satires; to which it must be added, that in the folio edition of the works of Pope, in 1735, it is further said, that "he never had the honour to *see* the Duke but twice." On this occasion Pope also wrote an explanatory letter to the Duke, who, in his answer, said, that "he took the application which had been made of this passage as a sign of the malice of the town against himself." That Pope was highly satisfied with the conduct of the Duke appears from the fine compliment he afterwards paid him in his Epistle on the Characters of Men:

"Thus gracious Chandos is belov'd at sight."

Ver. 103. *Greatness, with Timon,*] The first edition of this Epistle was in folio, 1731. A spurious one was published in octavo, 1732, with many severe remarks by Concanen and Welsted, as was supposed; to which was prefixed a print designed by Hogarth, in which Pope is represented standing on a builder's high stage, and white-washing the great gateway of Burlington House, and at the same time bespattering the coach of the Duke of Chandos passing by. Hogarth suppressed this print, which is now become very valuable. It is remarkable our author never once names Hogarth, though he had so many opportunities of doing it. *Warton.*

Ver. 110. *a labour'd quarry*] In his letters he applies this expression

Two Cupids squirt before: a lake behind
Improves the keenness of the northern wind.
His gardens next your admiration call,
On every side you look, behold the wall!
No pleasing intricacies intervene,
No artful wildness to perplex the scene;
Grove nods at grove, each alley has a brother,
And half the platform just reflects the other.
The suffering eye inverted Nature sees,
Trees cut to statues, statues thick as trees;
With here a fountain, never to be play'd;
And there a summer-house, that knows no shade;
Here Amphitrite sails thro' myrtle bowers;
The Gladiators fight, or die in flowers;
Unwater'd see the drooping sea-horse mourn,
And swallows roost in Nilus' dusty urn.
My Lord advances with majestic mien,
Smit with the mighty pleasure, to be seen:

NOTES.

pression to Blenheim; the massy magnificence of which Sir Joshua Reynolds always defended against the common cant of its being *heavy*. *Warton.*

Ver. 121. *With here a fountain,*] It is amusing to see how far our taste in gardening has spread. The present Empress of Russia writes thus to Voltaire, June 25, 1772: "J'aime à la folie présentement les jardins à l'Anglaise, les lignes courbes, les pentes douces, les étangs en forme de lacs, les archipels en terre ferme; et j'ai un profond mépris pour les lignes droits, les allées jumelles. Je hais les fontaines qui donnent la torture à l'eau pour lui faire prendre un cours contraire à sa nature; les statues sont reléguées dans les galeries, les vestibules, &c. En un mot, l'Anglomanie domine dans ma plantomanie." *Warton.*

Ver. 124.] The two statues of the *Gladiator pugnans*, and *Gladiator moriens*. *Pope.*

But soft—by regular approach—not yet—
First thro' the length of yon hot terrace sweat;
And when up ten steep slopes you've dragg'd your thighs,
Just at his study-door he'll bless your eyes.
His study! with what authors is it stor'd?
In books, not authors, curious is my Lord;
To all their dated backs he turns you round;
These Aldus printed, those Du Suëil has bound!
Lo, some are vellum, and the rest as good
For all his Lordship knows, but they are wood.
For Locke or Milton 'tis in vain to look,
These shelves admit not any modern book.

NOTES.

Ver. 130.] The *approaches* and *communication* of house with garden, or one part with another, ill-judged, and inconvenient. *Pope.*

Ver. 133. *His study! &c.*] The false taste in books; a satire on the vanity in collecting them, more frequent in men of fortune, than the study to understand them. Many delight chiefly in the elegance of the print, or of the binding; some have carried it so far, as to cause the upper shelves to be filled with painted books of wood; others pique themselves so much upon books in a language they do not understand, as to exclude the most useful in one they do. *Pope.*

Ver. 138. *but they are wood.*] There is a flatness and insipidity in this couplet, much below the usual manner of our author. Young has been more sprightly and poignant on the same subject, *Universal Passion*, Sat. iii. *Warton.*

Ver. 139. *or Milton*] Dr. Warton says, "This is one of the few places in which our author seems to speak highly of Milton." But he speaks more justly and poetically of him in his Paraphrase of an Ode of Horace, part of the ninth Ode of the fourth Book:

"Tho' daring Milton *sits* sublime,
In Spenser native Muses play." *Bowles.*

And now the Chapel's silver bell you hear,
That summons you to all the pride of prayer:
Light quirks of music, broken and uneven,
Make the soul dance upon a jig to Heaven.
On painted ceilings you devoutly stare,
Where sprawl the saints of Verrio or Laguerre,

NOTES.

Ver. 142.] The false taste in *Music*, improper to the subjects, as of light airs in churches, often practised by the organist, &c. *Pope.*

Ver. 145. And in *Painting* (from which even Italy is not free) of naked figures in churches, &c. which has obliged some Popes to put draperies on some of those of the best masters. *Pope.*

Ver. 146. *Where* sprawl] This single verb has marked with felicity and force the distorted attitudes, the indecent subjects, the want of nature and grace so visible in the pieces of these two artists, employed to adorn our royal palaces and chapels. "I cannot help thinking," says Pope to Mr. Allen, in Letter lxxxix. vol. ix. "and I know you will join with me, who have been making an altar-piece, that the zeal of the first reformers was ill-placed in removing pictures (that is to say, examples) out of churches; and yet suffering epitaphs (that is to say, flatteries and false history) to be a burthen to church-walls, and the shame as well as derision of all honest men." This is a sentiment, it may be said, of a papistical poet; and yet it appears to be founded on good sense, and religion well understood. Notwithstanding the many just and well-founded arguments against Popery, yet I hope we may still, one day, see our places of worship beautified with proper ornaments, and the generosity and talents of our living artists perpetuated on the naked walls of St. Paul's. *Warton.*

It is not only in a national, but in a religious point of view, that I would here enforce the foregoing remarks of Dr. Warton. The introduction of paintings into our churches on proper subjects, and in proper situations, would not only open a new field for the arts in this country, where they are at present confined to the chance remuneration of private patronage, but would expand the feelings

On gilded clouds in fair expansion lie,
And bring all paradise before your eye.
To rest, the cushion and soft Dean invite,
Who never mentions hell to ears polite.
But hark! the chiming clocks to dinner call;
A hundred footsteps scrape the marble hall:
The rich buffet well-colour'd serpents grace,
And gaping Tritons spew to wash your face.
Is this a dinner? this a genial room?
No, 'tis a temple, and a hecatomb.
A solemn sacrifice, perform'd in state,
You drink by measure, and to minutes eat.

NOTES.

feelings, and *speak* to the eye with no less force than the preacher *paints* to the ear. With respect to any objections that might arise from picturesque representations being mistaken for objects of worship, the time is long gone by, and to allege them in the present day would be perfectly ridiculous. As we have admitted works of sculpture into our places of worship, there seems no reason why the Sister-art should be deprived of the same privilege.

Ver. 146. *Verrio or Laguerre,*] Verrio (Antonio) painted many ceilings, &c. at Windsor, Hampton-Court, &c. and Laguerre at Blenheim-castle, and other places. *Pope.*

Ver. 150. *Who never mentions hell to ears polite.*] This is a fact. A reverend Dean, preaching at Court, threatened the sinner with punishment in "a place which he thought it not decent to name in so polite an assembly." *Pope.*

Ver. 153.] Taxes the incongruity of *Ornaments* (though sometimes practised by the ancients), where an open mouth ejects the water into a fountain, or where the shocking images of serpents, &c. are introduced into grottos or buffets. *Pope.*

Ver. 155. *Is this a dinner? &c.*] The proud festivals of some men are here set forth to ridicule, where pride destroys the ease, and formal regularity all the pleasurable enjoyment, of the entertainment. *Pope.*

So quick retires each flying course, you'd swear
Sancho's dread Doctor, and his wand were there.
Between each act the trembling salvers ring,
From soup to sweet-wine, and God bless the King.
In plenty starving, tantaliz'd in state,
And complaisantly help'd to all I hate,
Treated, caress'd, and tir'd, I take my leave,
Sick of his civil pride from morn to eve;
I curse such lavish cost, and little skill,
And swear no day was ever pass'd so ill.

Yet hence the poor are clothed, the hungry fed;
Health to himself, and to his infants bread
The labourer bears. What his hard heart denies,
His charitable vanity supplies.

Another age shall see the golden ear
Imbrown the slope, and nod on the parterre,

COMMENTARY.

Ver. 173. *Another age, &c.*] But now a difficulty sticks with me

NOTES.

Ver. 160. Sancho's *dread Doctor,*] See Don Quixote, chap. xlvii. *Pope.*

Ver. 169. *Yet hence the poor, &c.*] This is the *Moral* of the whole; where PROVIDENCE is justified in giving Riches to those who squander them in this manner. A bad taste employs more hands, and diffuses wealth more usefully than a good one. This recurs to what is laid down in Book I. Ep. ii. ver. 230—7, and in the Epistle preceding this, Ver. 161, &c. *Pope.*

This reflection is very different from the flagitious principle of Mandeville, that private vices are public benefits. Of whom, says Hume very shrewdly, "Is it not very inconsistent for an author to assert in one page, that moral distinctions are inventions of politicians for public interest; and in the next page maintain that vice is advantageous to the public?" *Warton.*

Deep harvests bury all his pride has plann'd,
And laughing Ceres re-assume the land.

COMMENTARY.

me (answers an objector); this load of evil still remains a monument of folly to future ages; an incumbrance to the plain on which it stands; and a nuisance to the neighbourhood round about, filling it

" —— with imitating fools."

For men are apt to take the example next at hand; and aptest of all to take a bad one. No fear of that, replies the Poet (from ver. 172 to 177.). Nothing absurd or wrong is exempt from the jurisdiction of Time; which is always sure to do full justice on it:

" Another age shall see the golden ear
Imbrown the slope, and nod on the parterre,
Deep harvests bury all his pride has plann'd,
And laughing Ceres re-assume the land."

For the prerogative of

" —— Time shall make it grow,"

is only due to the designs of *true Taste* joined to *use;* and

"'Tis *use* alone that *sanctifies* expense;"

and nothing but the sanctity of *that* can arrest the justice of Time. And thus the second part concludes, which, consisting of an *example* of *false* taste in every attempt to magnificence, is full of concealed *precepts* for the *true;* as the first part, which contains *precepts* for *true* taste, is full of *examples* of the *false.*

NOTES.

Ver. 173. *Another age, &c.*] Had the Poet lived but three years longer, he had seen his general prophecy against all ill-judged magnificence fulfilled in a very particular instance. *Warburton.*

In the edition of 1751, this note ran thus: "Had the poet lived three years longer he had seen this prophecy fulfilled:" which so plainly pointed at what had happened at Canons, that it was altered as it here stands. *Warton.*

Ver. 176. *And laughing Ceres re-assume the land.*] The great beauty of this line is an instance of the art peculiar to our Poet; by which he has so disposed a trite classical figure, as not only

Who then shall grace, or who improve the soil?
Who plants like BATHURST, or who builds like BOYLE.

COMMENTARY.

III.

Ver. 177. *Who then shall grace, &c.*] We come now to the third and last part (from ver. 176 to the end), and, as in the first, the Poet had given examples of wrong-judged *Magnificence*, in things of *Taste, without Sense;* and, in the second, an example in others, *without either Sense or Taste;* so the third presents us with two examples of *Magnificence* in *Planting and Building*, where *both Sense and Taste* highly prevail. The one, in him to whom this Epistle is addressed; and the other, in the noble person whose amiable character bore so conspicuous a part in the foregoing:

" Who then shall grace, or who improve the soil?
Who plants like BATHURST, or who builds like BOYLE."

Where, in the fine description he gives of these two species of *Magnificence*, he artfully insinuates, that though, when executed in a *true Taste*, the great end and aim of both be the same, viz. the *general* good in use or ornament; yet that their progress to this end is carried on in direct contrary courses; that, in *Planting* and culture, the private advantage of the neighbourhood is first promoted, till, by time, it rises up to a public benefit:

" Whose ample lawns are not asham'd to feed
The milky heifer, and deserving steed;
Whose rising forests, not for pride or show,
But future buildings, future navies, grow."
" Bid harbours open, public ways extend,
Bid temples, worthier of the God, ascend;
Bid the broad arch the dangerous flood contain;
The mole projected break the roaring main."

And when the public hath been properly accommodated and adorned, then, and not till then, the works of private *Magnificence* may

NOTES.

to make it do its vulgar office, of representing a very *plentiful harvest*, but also to assume the personage of *Nature*, re-establishing herself in her rights, and mocking the vain efforts of magnificence, which would keep her out of them. *Warburton.*

'Tis use alone that sanctifies expense,
And splendor borrows all her rays from sense.
His father's acres who enjoys in peace,
Or makes his neighbours glad, if he encrease;
Whose cheerful tenants bless their yearly toil,
Yet to their Lord owe more than to the soil;
Whose ample lawns are not asham'd to feed
The milky heifer, and deserving steed;

COMMENTARY.

may take place. This was the order observed by those two great empires, from whom we received all we have of this polite art. We do not read of any magnificence in the private buildings of Greece or Rome, till the generosity of their public spirit had adorned the state with temples, emporiums, council-houses, common porticos, baths, and theatres.

NOTES.

Ver. 179, 180. *'Tis use alone that* sanctifies *expense,*
And splendor borrows all her rays from sense.]
Here the Poet, to make the *examples* of good taste the better understood, introduces them with a summary of his *Precepts*, in these two sublime lines; for, the consulting *Use* is *beginning with Sense*, and the making *Splendor* or *Taste borrow all its rays* from thence, is *going on with Sense*, after she has led us up to *Taste*. The art of this disposition of the thought can never be sufficiently admired. But the expression is equal to the thought. This *sanctifying* of expense gives us the idea of something consecrated and set apart for sacred uses; and indeed it is the idea under which it may be properly considered; for wealth employed according to the intention of Providence is its true consecration; and the real uses of humanity were certainly *first* in its intention.
Warburton.

Lord Chesterfield wrote the following lines, intending to shew that Lord Burlington did not always attend to this rule of our Poet:

" Possess'd of one great hall for state,
Without one room to sleep or eat,
How well you build, let flattery tell,
And all mankind, how ill you dwell." *Warton.*

Whose rising forests, not for pride or show,
But future buildings, future navies, grow:
Let his plantations stretch from down to down,
First shade a country, and then raise a town.
You too proceed! make falling arts your care,
Erect new wonders, and the old repair;
Jones and Palladio to themselves restore,
And be whate'er Vitruvius was before:

NOTES.

Ver. 191. *You too proceed!*] This is not fulsome adulation, but only such honest praise as the noble Lord, whom he addressed, strictly deserved; who inherited all that love of science and useful knowledge for which his family has been so famous. The name of Boyle is indeed auspicious to literature. That sublime genius and good man, Bishop Berkeley, owed his preferment chiefly to this accomplished peer; for it was he that recommended him to the Duke of Grafton, in the year 1721, who took him over with him to Ireland when he was Lord Lieutenant, and promoted him to the Deanery of Derry in the year 1724. Berkeley gained the patronage and friendship of Lord Burlington, not only by his true politeness, and the peculiar charms of his conversation, which was exquisite, but by his profound and perfect skill in architecture; an art which he had very particularly and accurately studied in Italy, when he went and continued abroad four years with Mr. Ashe, son of the Bishop of Clogher. With an insatiable and philosophic attention, Berkeley surveyed and examined every object of curiosity. He not only made the usual tour, but went over Apulia and Calabria, and even travelled on foot through Sicily, and drew up an account of that very classical ground; which was lost in a voyage to Naples, and cannot be sufficiently regretted. His generous project for erecting an university at Bermudas, the effort of a mind truly active, benevolent, and patriotic, is sufficiently known.
Warton.

Ver. 193. *Jones*] See an accurate and judicious account of his works in Walpole's Anecdotes, vol. ii. from page 261 to page 280, full of curious particulars. Dr. Clarke, of All Souls College, Oxford,

Till Kings call forth th' ideas of your mind,
(Proud to accomplish what such hands design'd)
Bid harbours open, public ways extend,
Bid temples, worthier of the God, ascend;

NOTES.

Oxford, had Jones's Palladio, with his own notes and observations in Italian, which the Doctor bequeathed to Worcester College. *Warton.*

Ver. 195, 197, &c. *Till Kings—Bid harbours open, &c.*] The Poet, after having touched upon the proper objects of magnificence and expense, in the private works of great men, comes to those great and public works which become a prince. This poem was published in the year 1732, when some of the new-built churches, by the act of Queen Anne, were ready to fall, being founded in boggy land, which is satirically alluded to in our author's imitation of Horace, Lib. ii. Sat. ii.

" Shall half the new-built churches round thee fall?"

Others were vilely executed, through fraudulent cabals between undertakers, officers, &c. Dagenham-breach had done very great mischiefs; many of the highways throughout England were hardly passable; and most of those which were repaired by turnpikes were made jobs for private lucre, and infamously executed, even to the entrance of London itself. The proposal of building a bridge at Westminster had been petitioned against and rejected; but in two years after the publication of this poem, an act for building a bridge passed through both Houses. After many debates in the committee, the execution was left to the carpenter above mentioned, who would have made it a *wooden one;* to which our author alludes in these lines:

" Who builds a bridge that never drove a pile?
Should Ripley venture, all the world would smile."

See the notes on that place. *Pope.*

Ver. 197. *Bid harbours open,*] No country has been enriched and adorned, within a period of thirty or forty years, with so many works of public spirit, as Great Britain has been; witness our many extensive roads, our inland navigations, (some of which excel the boasted canal of Languedoc,) the lighting, and the paving, and beautifying our cities, and our various and magnificent edifices.

Bid the broad arch the dangerous flood contain,
The mole projected break the roaring main; 200

NOTES.

edifices. A general good taste has been diffused in gardening, planting, and building. The ruins of Palmyra, the antiquities of Athens and Spalatro, and the Ionian antiquities, by Wood, Stuart, Adam, and Chandler, are such magnificent monuments of learned curiosity as no country in Europe can equal. Let it be remembered, that these fine lines of Pope were written when we had no Wyatt or Brown, Brindley or Reynolds; no Westminster Bridge, no Pantheon, no Royal Academy, no king that is at once a judge and a patron of all those fine arts, which ought to be employed in raising and beautifying a palace equal to his dignity and his taste.

On the whole, this Epistle contains rather strictures on the false taste, than illustrations of the true; which circumstance gave room to Mr. Mason to treat the subject in a more open and ornamental manner, and with more picturesque and poetical imagery, in his English Garden. *Warton.*

The connexion of this Epistle with the preceding, is, that it completes the subject "*of the use of riches*," by shewing the folly of *profusion*, as the former exhibited the effects of *avarice*. Its relation to the great plan contemplated by the author, consists chiefly in illustrating the opinion that *providence converts our errors as well as our vices into the means of benefit to others;* by rendering the eccentricities and abuses into which men fall, through an absurd taste and an ostentatious vanity, subservient to the general good; but the attractive nature of the subject led the Poet to extend it to a discussion on "*the principles of taste*," which he has shewn to consist, not in counterworking, but in improving nature, by the means of *good sense*. In this respect there is a coincidence and harmony in his manner of reasoning, which, although not insisted on by himself or his commentators, serves greatly to illustrate the truth of his general principles; for, as in the intellectual world, the business of the moralist is not to endeavour to *eradicate the ruling passion* or original natural disposition, but to subject it to the dominion of *reason*, and convert it to useful and beneficial purposes; so the improvement and decoration of *external scenery* can only be effected by *adhering to nature*, correcting her occasional deviations,

Back to his bounds their subject sea command,
And roll obedient rivers thro' the land:
These honours, peace to happy BRITAIN brings,
These are imperial works, and worthy Kings.

NOTES.

deviations, and enhancing her beauties, by the medium of *good sense;* and thus the same principle extends through the whole of the author's works, and serves to render each portion of them the best commentary on the other.

END OF VOL. V.

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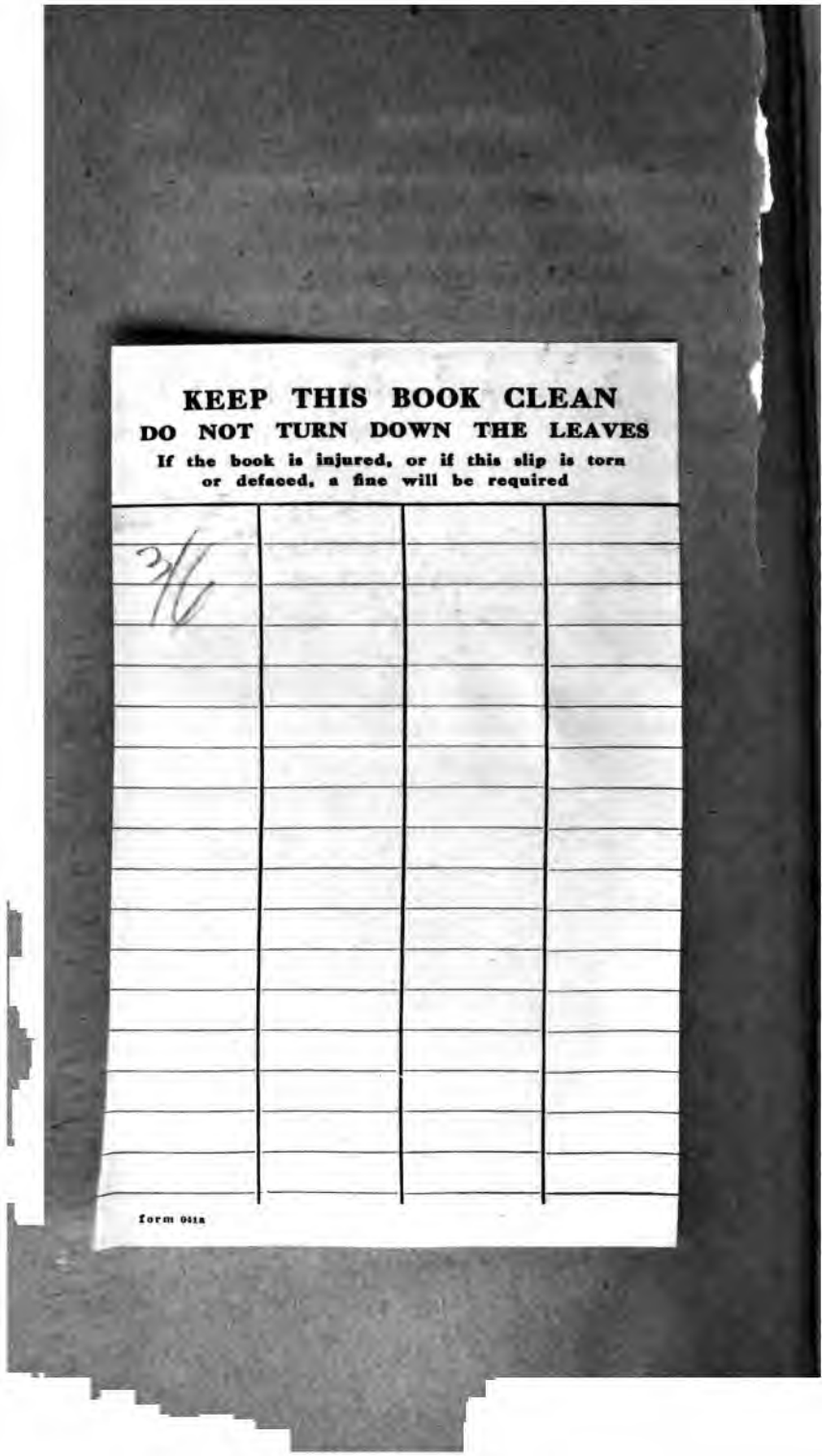

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